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HYPOCRISY DETECTED;

IN A

LETTER TO THE LATE FIRM

OF

HALDANE, EWING, AND Co.

all no 25-427

WITH A PREFACE,

CONTAINING THE

NARRATIVE OF MR. JAMES REID,

A MISSIONARY SENT BY THESE GENTLEMEN

TO UPPER CANADA.

Aberdeen:

PRINTED BY J. BOOTH, JUN. NORTH STREET.

PUBLIC ARCHIVES
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OF CANADA

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PREFACE.

HAPPENING to be in Scotland in 1799, I found the public mind very much agitated on the subject of LAY PREACHING. This had been forced into general notice by some zealous Gentlemen, who were actively employed (under an assumed title of the Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home) in sending itinerant Preachers through the country. The gross ignorance of these Preachers could only be equalled by their impudence, but their seeming disinterestedness soon gained them great influence with the people, and divisions and uncharitableness were excited in all the Parishes through which they passed. The General Assembly, alarmed at the progress which they made in disseminating their crude principles, and unsettling the minds of the people, addressed a Pastoral Letter to their Parishioners, admonishing them against these vagrant Theologians. This letter, which was read by the established Clergy in their Churches, was thought, by many, to contain expressions by far too severe, and assertions not sufficiently proved; but not being much interested in the dispute, I did not then examine the matter with that attention which might enable me to form a decided opinion. Having removed to this country soon after, I forgot the Society and its proceedings, till we were astonished, in October 1806, by the arrival of a Preacher from Mr. Haldane to enlighten us. The situation chosen for this Missionary was, of all others in the Province, the best supplied with religious instruction. He

placed himself, by order of his superiors, in the midst of a Congregation of Presbyterians who, before his arrival, were at unity among themselves, and none of them removed farther from the Church than the people in the more compact Parishes in Scotland. Their Clergyman, a Gentleman regularly educated for the Ministry in a Scotch University, is one of the most amiable and worthy characters ever known. He was adored by his people, and so zealous in the discharge of his duties, that he preached occasionally in all the surrounding settlements. This excellent man had the grief to see division and rancour introduced among his hearers, and that harmony destroyed which had been the fruit of twenty years labour. The few that joined the Missionary were active in spreading disorder, and among their ignorant neighbours, they were but too successful; the most odious passions were excited, and for a time true Religion entirely forgotten. Beholding these disorders, the dreadful consequences of this man's improper intrusion, the commotions which were raised in the Church of Scotland were recalled to my remembrance. I was not now surprised at the alarm taken by the General Assembly, for all the evils which they had anticipated were before my eyes. And upon examining the first report of the Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home, I perceived, that all the mischief might have been foreseen. This zealous body tell their preachers not to shew a preference for any denomination of Christians, either established or dissenting, but to exhort the people to attend wherever the Gospel is preached in purity. But who is to judge of this purity? Why, young men who can hardly read or write. Fanatics have always hated and despised human learning, in this they could not deceive. To divine illumination they might pretend—to the working of miracles many have laid claim—but knowledge is stubborn, and not to be obtained by sudden starts or hideous grimaces—it can only be acquired by long and diligent study. Accordingly,

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enthusiasts have pretended to all the gifts and privileges of Apostles, except that of speaking with tongues. That the established clergymen of education, of rational and pious habits, should not like to be scrutinized and watched by a set of unprincipled hypocrites, sent on purpose to find fault, may be reasonably supposed; for they did not look for much good from the Society's fourth rule, by which they command their itinerants to strengthen the hands of all faithful Ministers of JESUS CHRIST, of whatever denomination: for still the question recurred, who are Judges? That they were not considered faithful, fully appeared from the proceedings of the Society itself, and was more particularly evinced by the journals of the preachers. In them, we never find a particle of praise bestowed on Clergymen of the establishment. A stranger would think, that the itinerants had been marching through a benighted land, which had never heard any thing of Christianity.

Mr. Ballantine (proceedings in 1798) goes from Edinburgh to Thurso, through the most populous towns and cities, preaching to large assemblies, and does not seem to think that they ever had heard of the gospel before: if he make any exception, it is in favour of the Methodists, and a Mr. Cowie, a Seceder. He indeed acknowledges the kindness of the Minister of Calder and Urquhart, but faintly. He finishes his journal with the remark, that the fields are white unto harvest, sinners in almost every place perishing for want of knowledge, and earnestly desiring to hear the words of eternal life. Now, as churches are numerous, and the Ministry diligent, it follows, that they preach something else than Christianity, otherwise the people could not be thus ignorant. And as Mr. Ballantine knows the rules and principles of the Church of Scotland, either he disapproves of them, and consequently his preaching has a direct tendency to undermine the establishment; or, if he think that

the Confession of Faith contains a proper summary for the direction of godly Ministers, it is clearly inferred (if his assertions are true), that the Clergy are all hypocrites, professing principles with which their conduct does not correspond. These inferences flow from the Journals of the other Itinerants as well as Mr. Ballantine's; they never find any thing good in the establishment, and every place is dark and in the gall of bitterness, which does not furnish them with large congregations. Notwithstanding the melancholy evils which these preachers produce, the Society have the base effrontery to boast, that they are doing much good—giving feet to the lame and eyes to the blind. Indeed, they congratulated themselves not a little for sending Mr. Reid to this country; and if all the evils which were anticipated did not follow, it was owing, in a great degree, to the harmless peaceable disposition of this Missionary. He did not calumniate the Minister who was already among the people, nor did he adopt any sinister means to raise his own credit at his expence; for he soon became acquainted, to his cost, with the hypocrisy of his former associates and masters, endeavoured as much as possible to allay the fury of his adherents, though not with sufficient success. Finding that this poor young man had been grossly deceived and had good intentions, I began to pay him some little notice, for his situation was deplorable. The people he preached to being too poor to support him, it was expected that Messrs. Haldane & Co. would assist him; they made indeed some remittance for the purpose of building a Church, but afterwards they threw him off entirely. These Gentlemen had got the fame of sending a Missionary to Canada at a vast expence—of building a church there, of which they did not pay one-third—and it was no longer necessary, in their opinion, to trouble themselves any farther. Mr. Reid was, therefore, left destitute in a foreign land, without any friends or acquaintance that could be of use to him; for, having come from persons deservedly suspected

pected, people of sense and influence kept at a distance. The young man was forced at length to leave the people, from absolute want, and to teach a small School in the neighbourhood, by which he earns a scanty subsistence, and has much cause to regret that he ever left his father's farm to become a Preacher. In this distressed situation, he communicated to me the following Narrative, which will be read with interest, as it exposes the conduct of these Saints, and the deceptions which they practised upon the foolish youths, whom they allured from the paths of honest industry.

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NARRATIVE OF MR. REID.

TO ROBERT HALDANE, ESQ.

SIR,

COMFORT is frequently experienced in detailing grievances, even when there is no hope of receiving redress. To communicate sorrows which oppress the mind is felt to lighten it, and this is, with me, a strong motive for troubling you with this letter. But lest the length of time which has elapsed since our correspondence ceased, and the events which have taken place, may have effaced, from your memory, all recollection of me, you must excuse me for addressing you in public; the more especially, as what I have to relate may be of greater advantage to others than to myself. To bring me back to your remembrance, amidst the multiplicity of affairs which daily solicit your attention, I shall give you a very concise narrative of my life and fortunes, from the time that I first attached myself to your Society.

In the beginning of 1801, Mr. Campbell appeared at Dunkeld, in the vicinity of which I was born, preaching the Gospel. I was pleased with his manner, and became one of his most diligent and passionate

sionate hearers. Deeply impressed with the glorious views of the Gospel which he displayed, I became more desirous of obtaining a better acquaintance with religious truth, and for this purpose I applied for admission into his Church. With a mind early imbued with reverence for Religion, I was anxious to qualify myself to perform the part of a good Christian, and to discharge the conditions required by our SAVIOUR. After some conversation with Mr. Campbell, I very cordially embraced his doctrines, being, as I then thought, the truth as it is revealed. At this time I was nineteen years of age, and lived with my parents on a small farm, which they rented of the Duke of Athole. My education had not been neglected; I had learned to read, write, and cast accounts, and had the Shorter Catechism by heart. Before Mr. Campbell's arrival, I had regularly followed my parents to the Parish Church, but after hearing him a few times, I attached myself entirely to his congregation. From this Gentleman I learned, that a Society for propagating the Gospel at home, had been formed in Edinburgh in the year 1798. It owed its rise to a supposed conviction in the minds of its members, that sufficient means of religious instruction were not enjoyed in many parts of the country: to supply this defect, Christians of various denominations united themselves together, under the above designation. They publicly avowed, that they had no intention of forming a new sect, but wished that Christians of all divisions would join in promoting pure and undefiled Religion. As a
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proof of their sincerity in this particular, the Society occasionally employed Ministers, whether Episcopalians, Presbyterians, or Independents, to preach through the country. They proposed to preach the Gospel wherever they had access, to establish sabbath-day schools, and to distribute religious tracts: but as it was difficult to find suitable Ministers, he also told me that you had, with the most commendable liberality, established a Seminary for educating young men, and qualifying them to be preachers. This opened to me a new view of things; I had already pleased Mr. Campbell, and two or three of his congregation, by the answers which I gave to the questions which they propounded, when I solicited to be a member of their Church. They had expressed much satisfaction with my knowledge of divine truth, and this early approbation suggested the wish of becoming a Preacher of the Gospel. I found that the time, reckoned necessary for qualifying me for this great work, was not long, being commonly from fifteen months to two years; and I was earnestly desirous of becoming useful to my fellow-men, in the way of imparting religious instruction. After much private and serious consideration, I communicated my wish, with extreme diffidence, to my Pastor. He encouraged me, and advised me to make application to you as soon as possible, as you intended to receive a new class of students, to begin their studies in June, 1802. With a letter of introduction and recommendation from Mr. Campbell, I visited you in Edinburgh; and being approved of by your examiner,

aminer, as to my knowledge, character, and promising abilities, I was admitted into the Class on the 19th of June. Here I remained, with little interruption, pursuing my studies under your eye, until January 1806, when I was sent to the Congregational Church of Aberfeldie, Perthshire. It is but justice to remark, that we were exhorted to avoid speaking on Politics, either publicly or privately; and to confine ourselves to preaching salvation to the people—to shew no preference to any denomination of Christians, but to pay the same respect to the dissenters as those of the established church—to exhort our hearers to attend wherever the Gospel was preached in purity. We were enjoined to strengthen the hands of all faithful Ministers, and to discourage, as much as possible all party spirit, wherever it was discovered among Christians. With these instructions for our guidance, we were supported solely by the Society, and were prohibited from raising any collections among the people. You must remember, that the Society proceeded in this way for several years; your munificence supplied them with preachers, who were sent out on itinerant excursions in various directions, as seemed most useful. By degrees, however, the Society relaxed in its operations, itinerancies became less frequent, and permanent Churches superseded them. This was occasioned by a difference of opinion among those who were intrusted with the chief management. They thought that the infant Societies ought to support their own Preachers, and thus relieve the Society from part of the

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the expence. This was conceived to be the more reasonable, as several congregations, which were intimately connected with the Society, had already the merit of supplying the wants of their Pastors : but a resolution, adopted by the two Congregational Churches co-operating with the Society in Edinburgh, totally changed its complexion. One of these Churches was under the care of your brother, Mr. James Haldane, and the other under that of Mr. John Aikman. In April 1803, these two Churches declared—" that the formation of a Missionary Society seems to imply a deficiency in the Constitution of a Church of Christ, as if it were not competent for such to use all the means necessary for spreading the Gospel." From this time these churches engaged in Missions to go abroad, seemingly distinct from the Society, which appeared to weaken as they gained ground, and to be disparaged, as the declaration above cited was adopted. The truth, however, appeared to me, that the Society did not disappear, but changed its principles; and instead of being (as it professed to be at first) friendly to all denominations, it sunk into the sect of Congregationalists. I must confess, that this revolution, at the time, gave me some uneasiness; but I was reconciled by the hope of good which might still be effected, when I saw the zeal with which the plans were put in execution, and the collections, subscriptions, and donations, which were daily received from all parts to forward Missions. These particulars, which are all familiar to you, appeared necessary
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for understanding what follows, and will be the more easily excused, as I promise not to be tedious.

At Aberfeldie, I continued from January till May, and had the satisfaction to find, that I was very acceptable to the people, who were unanimous in requesting me to become their permanent Pastor; but this request I declined, as I had given you my promise to come out to this country. You must recollect the letters which these good people sent you, to solicit you to relieve me from this promise, and that they dispatched one of their number to Edinburgh for this purpose; but you were inflexible. I had many inducements to keep me at home, but I had passed my word, and therefore declined three other invitations from different congregations. Indeed, the accounts which you gave me of the religious state of this country, and the urgent application made for preachers, weighed more with me than every other consideration, and induced me to make the greatest sacrifices, in the expectation of being eminently useful here. Elevated with this, I left my congregation at Aberfeldie, and my relations, bathed in tears.

On the 25th of May, 1806, I was ordained, by prayer and laying on of hands, to preach the Gospel to my countrymen in Canada: and soon after, I embarked at Greenock for Quebec. I received a suit of cloaths, a few articles of little value, and Campbell on the Gospels; my passage was paid, and I
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got a draft of thirty pounds, to be given me when I landed in Quebec. Although I was a stranger to business, and unaccustomed to the ways of the world, from my continual residence in the country, I could not help observing a great difference in the outfits allowed to me, and those which had been given to the Missionaries, which you had sent out to Denmark, New York, and Quebec. They were furnished with all the necessaries which their situation required; they were supplied liberally with money, books, and clothes, as appears from printed accounts of expenditures on Missions. This marked difference caused some uneasiness in my mind; but being accustomed to place implicit confidence in your integrity, I repressed every disagreeable feeling. So great was my diffidence, and my faith in your protection, that I never made any particular inquiry, how I was to be supported after my arrival in Canada; but was contented with the general promise, that my wants should be supplied. This credulity was strengthened, by the ceremony of making me write my name in your book, that my hand might be identified. Now, Sir, my difficulties began; for, as if my preparation for a long sea voyage had not been sufficiently slight, I found myself consigned to a steerage passage. Surely this seemed to be taking advantage of my simplicity, and ignorance of sea affairs; for, had I known what a steerage passage was, I never would have entered the ship. I am aware, that a Missionary should be humble, and I was prepared to encounter unavoidable and unfore-

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seen difficulties; but this belonged to neither class: on no other occasion, as far as I know, was any Missionary treated in this manner, every one had a Cabin passage. Did you suppose, that it was a matter of indifference, or was it to save money, or was it to give me a lesson of patience, by accustoming me, during a long voyage of eleven weeks, to all kinds of privations, that I might be the better qualified for my important office? Was it sincere, was it honourable, to conceal from me, the miseries of a passage among the sailors, which subjected me to many insults, and took away from me all consideration and respect? Was this a situation to sooth my mind, bleeding with sorrow at my departure from all those I loved, never perhaps to see them more? My sufferings suggested doubts of your sincerity, which became the more painful, as I had been always accustomed to look up to you with the greatest respect.

When I landed at Quebec, another unforeseen difficulty exposed me to much uneasiness, and might have been attended with the most serious evils. I had been sent away without any certificate that I was a Missionary, and without any letter of recommendation. To most people who are acquainted with mankind, and the established intercourse of society, this will appear to have been owing to my own folly, and I must confess, that when the matter occurred, I was astonished at myself; but when it is recollected, that I had little knowledge of things of
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this kind, and never for a moment suspected the wisdom as well as purity of your intentions towards me, I shall not be looked upon with much severity, for thus appearing in the colony, without proper and necessary credentials. But although my simplicity and credulity, in a great measure, exculpate myself, surely you are to blame for all the trouble and inconvenience which this mission occasioned. As I had no means of proving myself a loyal subject of his Majesty, or even an honest man, it would not have been astonishing, or perhaps contrary to custom, had I been taken up as a suspicious character, who had been driven, by my crimes, to a foreign shore. Not being able to give any satisfactory account of myself by the papers I had with me, or by any friends, I certainly could not have blamed Government, had I been treated with rigour. That I was left unprotected, excites my gratitude to the Provincial Government: but what can I say to you, Sir, who had been accustomed to send Missionaries abroad, and was well acquainted with every facility and convenience which they required? My situation brings forcibly to my mind, the charge which the Rev. Mr. Ewing brought against you, when you proposed to send some of the preachers to England: "This proposal appeared to me little better than a convenient way of sending them to starve, or at least to struggle against the greatest hardships at a distance from their friends, who might have been more clamorous, had they witnessed what they had endured." Here was I in Quebec, liable to

be seized as a vagabond, without friend or acquaintance, and still two hundred and fifty miles from the place of my destination, with the slender provision of thirty pounds. I did not then know, though I have dearly experienced the truth of Mr. Ewing's accusation against you: "that it was an avowed part of your plan, to bear the Preacher's expences to the place he was destined to go, and when he arrived there, though he might not know one individual, nor have a single letter of recommendation, he was to be left to Providence; that is, he was to expect no more support from the friends who had turned him adrift." The truth of this charge has been fully exemplified in your usage of me, who have been left to struggle with the most grievous difficulties, unprotected and alone. Perhaps you might not consider this treatment as just or honourable, far less becoming the spirit of Christianity, were you to reflect for a moment, and to place yourself in my situation, and me in yours, would you then feel reason to be grateful for my treating you as you have treated me?

Towards the end of October I reached Glengary, and here I had no introduction; but recollecting the name of the person who had written the letter which you had published, I called upon him. My reception was not very agreeable; he asked me, with evident signs of regret and perturbation, how the Society could have paid so much attention to his letter, as to send out a Preacher. This remark made me recur to his letter, on reading which attentively,

tively, I am forced to admit, that he might very well wonder that a Society, assuming to itself functions so important, should have paid the smallest attention to a production so utterly contemptible. This letter not only appeared to be an enthusiastic effusion, dictated by vanity and presumption, but was filled with false statements, which might as easily have been detected in Scotland as in Canada. It invites twelve Ministers, and an equal number of Catechists, to come out; that the reformation they would produce would hardly be surpassed by that of Luther, Calvin, or Knox; that the population of the country increases so rapidly, that an hundred are born for every one that dies. I could not for a moment suppose, that this letter, which, from one end to the other, is a tissue of absurdities, could have induced you to send me out: I therefore inquired, whether or not other persons had also written to the Society, but I could discover none. I was now struck with astonishment; to give credit to a letter of this sort, and from it to send me into a foreign land, was to expose me to ruin with your eyes open. Even if the letter had not carried within itself its own condemnation, as it came from an individual, something more was necessary, before any Preacher ought to have been sent out. Yet, this was all the ground upon which you proceeded to dispatch me to Canada, and upon this farrago of falsehood and nonsense, was the following resolution adopted by you and your colleagues: "It is with great pleasure we now state, that a Gaelic Preacher, Mr. James Reid, is earnestly desirous of going

“out to his countrymen in Canada, and it is intended to send him by the first opportunity, which is expected to occur about the end of this month. We hope, that much advantage will arise from his being among the Highlanders in that country, of whom there are many thousands who can only speak their mother tongue. Their situation respecting religion is represented as truly deplorable, and we have had many urgent applications to send over to their help. Like all the other brethren who have gone out from the churches, Mr. Reid has prosecuted a course of studies for the cultivation of his gifts, and the acquirement of the original languages of the Old and New Testament. He has also been a considerable time engaged in preaching in the Highlands, and has had different invitations to that country to undertake the pastoral office, which he declined, in order that he might go to his destitute countrymen and others abroad.” On this resolution, you must allow me to make one or two remarks: it says, “that there are many thousands who can only speak their mother tongue.” This is a misrepresentation; there are not twenty persons, and these very old, who do not speak and understand the English language. It farther says, “their situation with respect to religion is truly deplorable.” As this representation came only from one person, whose letters were filled with such absurdities and falsehoods as deprived them of all credit, it ought not to have been so easily adopted by a grave Society—and the truth is just the reverse,

verse. The Highlanders in the County of Glengary, in Upper Canada, occupy a space not so large as some Highland Parishes, and are supplied with two clergymen of the most respectable characters; one a Catholic and the other a Presbyterian. The inhabitants are nearly equally divided, one half Catholic, the other Presbyterian. With the Catholic part, it is evident, I could have no influence; and the Rev. Gentleman who directed the spiritual concerns of the Presbyterians, attends to his duty with such real knowledge and christian charity, that I was forced to confess that, in point of religious instruction and example, very few had so good opportunities as the persons whom I had come out to teach. The resolution proceeds to say, "that many urgent applications had been made to send over to their help." As I know only one person who applied, the word many must mean repeated applications from him; but in that case, it is not very explicit, since it misleads the public into the supposition, that many applications from different persons had been made, which certainly was not the case.

I now found myself in the most disagreeable situation possible to be conceived; I had no opportunity of teaching religion to people who were ignorant of it—I could not begin my mission, without making a division in a congregation that lived in peace and harmony with each other, and who all loved their worthy Minister as their father and friend. Shall I endeavour, said I, to destroy this beautiful scene,

this christian family? In point of pecuniary matters also, I was not at ease—my thirty pounds had been considerably exhausted in coming from Quebec, the cold weather was coming on, and I had hardly enough to purchase cloathing to guard against it. In this dilemma, I was at a loss what to do, and wished myself at home a thousand times: I was looked upon, not as a Preacher of the Gospel, but a sower of division, a promoter of schism—the respectable part of society refused my acquaintance—the man who had invited me out by his letters to the Society was found to be a person of no influence; on the contrary, rather mean and contemptible—I had no person to look up to, and no one to consult. While in this situation, and very uneasy in mind, I received an invitation from a few families, who had left Scotland very lately, to preach for them. As they lived at some distance from the clergyman of the place, and were more attached to our modes than his, I thought myself justified in going to them, and with them I have continued till very lately, preaching the Gospel. I had determined never to speak unfavourably of the opinions of others, and neither directly nor indirectly to diminish the good which the worthy clergyman was doing. I did not place myself in array against him, for I never can suppose, that we promote christianity by raising the malignant passions.

A short acquaintance with your correspondent did not raise his character in my estimation, I found
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him a paltry fellow, always interfering with other people's affairs: he was vain of being a correspondent of the Society, though ashamed at their sending out a Preacher, and did not hesitate to put the grossest falsehoods in his letters, one I shall notice: he never went a foot for the religious tracts which he says refreshed him so much, but, being in Montreal on business, he borrowed them. Instead of being influenced by religious motives, he seems to have no other principle but gross vanity, which he will gratify even at the expence of his morals. While he was applying to the Society for Preachers and Catechists, he was also writing to Mr. M'Diarmid, a Minister in the Relief Church, for as many from their Synod, and for no fewer than one hundred Schoolmasters.

In consequence of this, Mr. M'Diarmid sent out his own brother, a decent virtuous young man, as a Schoolmaster, who has been grievously disappointed, and exposed to the most bitter difficulties, as well as myself. It would be easy for me to mention many facts against the character of your correspondent, by whose letters I was brought out; but these letters are a sufficient testimony against him, and I fear against you, who could not but perceive, that he was unworthy of notice. But, perhaps, a portion of that vanity for which he is distinguished, entered your eyes from his letters, and suggested that it would appear great for the Society to have to announce, that they had dispatched a Preacher
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to Upper Canada to enlighten the miserable Highlanders—as to what became of the Preacher, that, as Mr. Ewing observed, was no concern of yours.

Less than half a year finished the last farthing of my money, though I lived as carefully and narrowly as possible, and indeed meanly. Knowing that I must soon be in want, I wrote you, in January 1807, requesting a supply; but you had already taken care to anticipate a demand of this kind, by writing Mr. Dick in Quebec, that it was a preacher's duty to remove to another place, if he meet with no support from the people among whom he laboured. But would it not have been proper to have accompanied this advice with the means of removal—and was it agreeable to the general engagement when I left Scotland, that my wants should be supplied, or even with the following extract of a letter, which was written in March 1807, from one of the brethren who was not perhaps fully acquainted with your intentions. "I trusted," says the writer, "that you would have applied to Mr. Dick when you was in want of more money, though it is to be expected, that those among whom you labour will not be unmindful of your wants. The brethren have every confidence in you, dear brother, and will always be glad to assist you. You can, therefore, inform Mr. Dick what at any time you may have occasion for, and we will most cheerfully supply your wants." I did apply to Mr. Dick when I was in want of more money, and he frequently

quently wrote to the brethren on the subject, but nothing came. Your determination not to assist Preachers, but to leave them to Providence, after they reached the place of their destination, had more weight than the writer above quoted, and I found myself totally abandoned to the mercy of strangers in a foreign land. After my first application for money failed, I discontinued to write to the Society, except, I believe, two letters, in which I mentioned the ill usage which I had received; I could not think of continuing a correspondence with persons who had forfeited my confidence, and who had placed me in a situation which exposed me to the greatest hardships, without possessing the means of extricating myself; I found myself even in a worse situation, in exterior matters, than a banished man. I was sent away with little or no money or necessaries, exposed to the insults of common seamen, without a certificate to tell who I was, without any recommendation, placed among strangers without friend or acquaintance, and then forsaken by those who had sent me out, as if I had been a vile miscreant. My present hope, however, is, that my hardships will not be altogether useless—from my treatment, other young men may learn what they have to expect, and be deterred from trying the same experiment, even though you, Sir, should exhort them to it, and promise faithfully to supply their future wants. When my money was spent, I was obliged to run in debt for my food and other articles, my people being able to give me little or nothing; and what

what was worse, my debts accumulated without any prospect of relief. This rendered a compliance with your prudent advice impracticable, for I had no way of removing, unless I absconded like a villain; and if I remained, the horrors of a jail stared me in the face.

When my circumstances were almost desperate, I obtained a School, which, though the wages were but small, greatly contributed to my relief; and by taking a few scholars to board, I was enabled, in the space of two years, to discharge the greater part of my debts. During all this time I was assiduous in preaching: I was going on in this way, living very homely but with comfort, and gradually obtaining the respect of those who did not approve of my religious pursuits, and who had always considered me an intruder; and I had even forgotten, in a great measure, the unmerited treatment which I had received at yours and the brethren's hands, when your conduct, and that of your brother, again blasted my affairs. This was owing to your change of opinions. At first, the reports concerning these charges were viewed as calumnies. It could not be supposed, that men who had so long distinguished themselves by finding fault with the religious opinions of others, had not yet fixed their own—that they had been all this time disseminating error, bringing young men forward to support it, exciting divisions among christians, and drawing them from the truth, to support what they now declared themselves

selves to be pernicious errors. There was something so immoral in all this, so utterly destitute of all correct principle, that it could not be believed, and I did not hesitate to call the reports the grossest falsehoods. To teach errors voluntarily is the worst of vice—to pretend to teach before we have learned, is the most wicked sort of pride; but I was soon reduced to silence, the changes were avowed in your own publications. The people finding me connected with a denomination so unfixed in their principles, and so little to be admired in their practice, withdrew their children: my hearers decreased, and the few that remained were discontented and troublesome, lest I should imitate you in plunging them into the river. I continued another year struggling with these difficulties, teaching a few children, and preaching as before, but with no success, and I found myself obliged from absolute necessity to retire. But where to go, and what to do with the Church which I had built, and to which the Society had reluctantly given some assistance, were questions which I could not answer. At length I obtained a small School in Cornwall, the county town, and sold the Church, much below its value, to the Presbyterian Congregation. Here I am teaching a small School, without the means of returning home, still surrounded with difficulties, and after passing five years of the greatest misery that can befall a man who is conscious of no crime—and all this misery I have suffered from my connexion with you and your Society. I do not write you in this public manner

manner in expectation of any redress, but to prevent other young men from being deluded as I have been.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

JAMES REID.

PREFACE

SUCH is the story of Mr. Reid, and his miserable situation at present. After I had perused it, I was induced to inquire what the Society had been doing since I had the honour of hearing Rate belch forth his blasphemies, and Rowland Hill his conceits, in 1799; and this inquiry produced the Poetical Letter to the late Firm of Messrs. Haldane, Ewing, & Co. I wrote in verse that I might, as was said of a late celebrated Satyrist, have pegs on which to hang my notes; both, however, contain matter which ought to be more generally known, to serve as an antidote against hypocritical attempts in future. Had these itinerants gone round in a peaceable manner, and never preached against regular order and subordination, they might have done some good and little harm; but in that case, very few would have attended their harangues. It was their declamations against the established clergy, whom they branded as lukewarm, preaching nothing but old morals, neglecting the poor, &c. that give a zest to their sermons. The common people were delighted to hear these false and slanderous allegations, and they were puffed up with spiritual pride, to see all the members of a fellowship-meeting gaping attentively to their explanations of difficult passages of Scripture. When these fanatics not only spread dissension through the land, but begin also to be defended in periodical publications, if not with much ability, yet with sufficient zeal and acrimony, it becomes men of liberal minds to step forward, and overwhelm them with the force of truth. It has occurred to me, that some of the expedients, which they use to disseminate their pernicious principles, might be very properly turned against them. If the Teachers of Sunday Schools, for example, instead of ignorant enthusiasts, were men of sound religious principles, who had received a good education, and were capable of giving a rational account of the questions and the texts on which they rest, and to lead the pupils more to practical godliness than to mystical opinions, the greatest good

good might be anticipated. Such men would keep their pupils always in mind that they were accountable beings, that there was something for them to do: and there is every reason to think, that the scholars thus instructed would be easily on their guard against the ravings of the tub. It has been remarked, that sectaries had little or no influence in Scotland till within these few years. Before the Erskines broke off from the church in 1734, there were none: and at the time that this Society commenced, their numbers were insignificant compared to the whole body of the people, not surely equal to the increased population. Even the Methodists, whose arts are astonishing, have made very little progress. The reason appears to be, that so long as the parish schools were an object, the people were too well educated to endure the miserable cant of the sects, which have increased as these parochial seminaries have declined. In order to stop their farther progress, and to clip their wings, the Schools ought to be put on a more respectable footing than ever; and the clergy ought to make this a main point in all their deliberations. It is however notorious, that the General Assembly, amidst all their plans for bettering the situation of their own stipends, have never done any thing for the Schoolmasters: a circumstance the more extraordinary, as all of them are under the greatest obligations to that most deserving class of men, and many of them were themselves Schoolmasters, before they had churches. Were the regular clergy to take a pride in having excellent Parochial Schools, and instead of shewing their miserable clerical dignity, by keeping the Teacher at what they call a respectable distance, to encourage him and promote his usefulness, they would not have the mortification of finding Sectaries in their Parishes. In Scotland, except in the large towns, the Parochial Schools are much better than the Lancastrian scheme, which, with all its advantages, is neither so liberal nor extensive in its operations. That this scheme

is deserving of the highest praise, and may be made exceedingly useful in England, is manifest from experience; but the confining the people to reading as Dr. Bell does, is a mockery to the poor, and bears a strong affinity to the miserable Casts of the East, from which its author may have taken the hint. Education ought certainly to have no other limits than what necessity imposes. It does not appear to me, however, that this method of teaching will be found to be of much use beyond the mere elements; when the judgment ripens and requires food, a teacher becomes necessary to direct its efforts. Among the laborious articles of a famous Literary Journal, I have often wondered, that the writers never thought of passing an eulogium on our Parochial Schools, where so many men of eminence have laid the foundation of a liberal education. Surely in praising the system of Bell and Lancaster, they might have found room for doing justice to the Parish Seminaries of Scotland, and for pointing out, in some respects, her great superiority. Nor ought they to have forgotten that, even in the article of economy, these Schools have long been and still are not inferior to those of Mr. Lancaster's. I have seen scholars taught a whole year for four shillings; and have full recollection, that one shilling for reading per quarter, 1s. 6d. for reading and writing, and 2s. for reading, writing, and arithmetic, or Latin, were the usual fees: a school of 80 or 100 scholars, salary and all, not amounting to more than L. 50 per annum. If it be true that some of these Journalists, who really at times give us splendid articles, have derived the first elements of their own knowledge from our Parochial Schools, they are not very grateful in not calling the attention of the public to their more liberal support. As I have fallen upon Journalists, I cannot help reverting to another Journal, which has been humbly suggested by our Edinburgh one, and, without equal ability, has copied its defects; both Journals introduce at times articles of extraordinary imbecility,

lity, but our Scotch Critics have commonly a set off in the same number, a mode of retribution seldom adopted by our London quarterly-men. The article to which I allude is the 13th of No. VIII, in which we have a laboured defence of the Methodists, drawn up in a very singular manner. I had indeed seen some strange assertions of theirs in the article on Missions, recommending the Baptist Mission to the protection of the English Church, as if these men did not hate all kinds of establishments, more strongly than they hate idolatry: yet there was so much good sense in that article, that I was not prepared for their strange defence of Methodists and Evangelists. This article, which appears to be laboriously drawn up, censures, with much acrimony, the hints of the Barrister, who, in his desultory attacks, has given great offence to all the sectaries. The Journalist stoutly denies, that the doctrines of the Methodists and Evangelists tend to demoralize the people; but here the Barrister is too strong, the specimens which he draws from the writings of Hawker, Hill, and Toplady, &c. cannot be refuted by ten thousand empty assertions, and therefore the Journalist, after some vehement denial, finding the warfare unequal, passes to a general defence of the Methodists and Evangelical Preachers. I read the article over several times, before I could bring myself to determine whether it was an ironical satire, or a serious defence; but when I came to the assertion, "It is not indeed possible, for an unprejudiced or even an honest observer, to doubt that the Methodists produce great and certain good among the lower classes," I found the Reviewer in sober earnest friendly to the sectaries, to the doctrines which they teach, and in general to their mode of teaching them. He tells us, that "they instruct the grossly ignorant in their duties, and they frequently reclaim the idle, the profligate, the drunken, and even those whose habits of ferocious brutality seem to be inveterate, and would certainly be inveterate

"by

"by any other means." Again, "go into the collieries, or to the manufactories of Birmingham and Sheffield, and inquire what are the practical consequences of Methodism wherever it has spread among the poor; industry and sobriety, quiet and orderly habits, and the comfort which results from them will be found its fruits." Now, if we should freely admit, with this conciliatory writer, who is unquestionably one of the Church Evangelical Preachers, that the Methodists do all the good which he asserts they do, still it may be reasonably asked, whether this good is not much more than counterbalanced by the evil. To prove that the evil wonderfully predominates, we need only examine this article. Their confessions to one another does infinitely more evil, in which they ask the most trying questions, expose the most secret thoughts and temptations, make the young familiar with ideal crimes, accustom their imaginations to all sorts of impurity; and from hearing of the struggles and failings of others, they become much less disposed and less able to resist temptations. Here the modesty, the chastity of the soul is forever destroyed; and as the writer justly remarks, this practice is more likely to make more street-walkers than their preaching can ever reclaim. Now, as all must attend bands or classes, the minds of all must be corrupted by this pernicious practice; consequently, all share in the evil, and but few in the good. No person will say, that all who join the Methodists are reclaimed even from their exterior vices, for it is only exterior vices which call out their wrath; but all confess, and this one practice evidently produces much more evil than all the good which they do. But this is not all, the spirit of exclusion is terrible—had they the power, there is not the smallest room for doubting, that they would persecute in the most cruel manner, for already they hold all those not of their society with Turks, Jews, and Infidels, and in a state of damnation. Marriages without their pale are strictly

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forbidden—they even destroy the harmony of domestic union by their absurd restrictions—the women shall dress as they direct, not to please their husbands—they are filled with bigotry, fanaticism, and uncharitableness—they corrupt religion with miraculous interpositions of Providence, and believe in them more strictly than in Revelation itself—they cast lots on the most frivolous occasions, bring back faith in apparitions and witchcraft—they delight in considering themselves a distinct people, and their looks, tones of voice, dress and manners, prove them to be so. They have no national feelings, no regard for the public welfare and prosperity of the nation; if they proceed prosperously, what is the rest of the world to them. In their private relations also, they loose all that sympathy and affection which bind society together; every thing centres in the Tabernacle, and in its good fortune only they rejoice: they have arrived at a stoical apathy by a very different principle from that of Zeno. If they lose a father, a wife, or a child, they are not satisfied with being patiently resigned, but they think it meritorious to prove that they do not feel. They are seen exulting, therefore, in calamities that press the feeling heart to the ground. The writer of this knew of a woman, belonging to the Methodists, whose husband was accidentally killed; but this heroine, although she had eight children, thanked the Lord for his mercies, and harangued the people at the grave. That they are desirous of overturning the establishment, and rejoice in the destruction of the play-houses, &c. I think of less consequence, because, though bad enough, these do not include corruption of heart; but will the execrable conversions they make be an equivalent for their intolerance, for their miserable views of Christianity, for their seclusion, for their night feasts and field meetings in America, for the poison which they daily disseminate in their periodical publications. I am certainly of opinion, that he who does not think that they do ten times more evil than

than they do good, is incapable of reasoning, and can tell the moment of his conversion; indeed, they make more people insane than they make holy. Yet the Methodists, taken all in all, are not so bad as the Haldanites, who give public accounts of their conversion in person, and tell the whole congregation a long story of former wickedness, compunctions, struggles, convictions, and conversions, to their great edification, all of which is false. Not do the Methodists intrude themselves so much upon the public, or appear so inveterate in their demeanor towards the establishment. You never hear of a Methodist going to hear a respectable Clergyman, and haranguing the people at the Porch, telling them that they have been hearing damnable doctrines. It is curious to reflect on the alacrity with which the good people of Scotland assent to the eternal damnation of all their ancestors; for if the new opinions which the Haldanites have broached are good, or those of Ewing and his brother congregationalists exclusively founded in Scripture, and present, as they say, the only saving system of faith, then are all our forefathers lost. This, indeed, is an inference which many of these deluded people do not wish to draw; but were they to consider the matter rightly, they would perceive it to be borne fully out by their conduct. Not the intrepidity of John Knox himself, his zeal, his fortitude, his sufferings for the faith, could save him, for he neither believed as Haldane nor as Ewing believe. Wishart, that holy martyr, whose life resembled in every respect one of the Apostles, and who suffered the most excruciating torments at the stake, belonged to the Kirk of Scotland; professed and believed what she still professes and believes; and consequently, in Ewing's opinion, was a Son of Babylon, and could not be saved. And are you ready to pass sentence of condemnation, by your conduct, ye people of Scotland! on the blessed Martyrs and eminent Reformers of the Church? Are you ready to consign the famous martyrs Andrew Mill,

Cargill, Cameron, and an host of worthies who suffered in the cause of the Gospel, to the bottomless pit? If you are not, hasten back to the Establishment, frequent your Parish Churches, and prefer the sound doctrine which you hear there—the rational and scriptural views of man's nature, his corruption and redemption, to the ravings of ignorant and unprincipled men, whose mouths are full of lies.

UPPER CANADA, May 22, 1812.

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f you are
our Parish
you hear
ature, his
orant and

HYPOCRISY DETECTED.

OH! Brother Haldane,¹ Satan's greatest dread,
Of temple brokers wisely deem'd the head ;
Let Hope and Baring² dable in the stocks,
A richer mine you find in training flocks.
Oh great Apostle, of a faith unknown,
Unsettling others yet nuxix'd your own,
Who tried above Pope Wesley³ far to soar,
Or Whitefield ⁴ grave whom thousands still adore.

C 3

Alas!

¹ Mr. Robert Haldane was at the head of the Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home. He is a Gentleman of independent fortune, part of which he has expended in promoting ostensibly its designs ; with what motives and views will afterwards appear, from the statements of his quondam friends. The letter is addressed more particularly to him as the Chief, but his brother, Mr. James Haldane, and Mr. Ewing, receive a full share of the Author's attentions.

² Hope and Baring, eminent Merchants and Money Lenders in London.

³ and ⁴—It is well known, that Mr. Wesley, as well as Mr. Whitefield, were the absolute Sovereigns or Autocrats of their sects. Nothing was done without their permission. Established Churches have regular canons and ordinances ; consequently, those who join them have an

Alas! like Phæton⁵ from this height you fell,
 But yours like his the praise of daring well;
 Le ' faithful Priests your waining fame purloin,
 Or for a share their paltry titles join.
 A very worm⁶ takes up his candid pen,
 To hand thy virtues down to future men;
 To prove that once you boldly sat alone,

Upon

opportunity of previously ascertaining the terms, and may adopt or reject them at pleasure; but those who joined themselves to the Founders of the Methodists were obliged to sacrifice their own reason and understanding, and blindly to follow the commands of a Despot. If this be religious freedom, it is of a new kind. A similar obedience was attempted to be established by Mr. Haldane, in his new sect.

⁵ Phæton's story is beautifully related in Ovid. This rash young man failed as much in guiding the Chariot of the Sun, as Mr. Robert Haldane in becoming the leader of his sect. Phæton thought that he could perform the duties of his father's office as well as his father Phœbus himself, whose remonstrance and affectionate advice he despised. Guided by his own heedlessness, he set fire to the world, and was dashed in pieces by the thunderbolt of Jupiter. Mr. Haldane thought himself equal to Wesley and Whitefield, particularly with his sapient brother at his back; but alas! one foolish step ruined all: he wished to succeed too soon, and introduced a rival.

⁶ A WORM.—The Poet here introduces himself, with all that affected humility which characterizes his sect—a virtue always in the mouth, but never in the heart. It must be confessed, that he is wonderfully impartial on the whole, and where he fails to speak, our commentary will supply the omission.

Upon the Scottish propagating throne ;⁷
By brother James⁸ upheld, who works unseen,

An

⁷ Mr. Robert Haldane commonly settled with the Preachers on their return from their itinerant excursions, and was very keen in his reckonings. They were paid at the rate of £24 per annum, carefully deducting a proportion of this, when they were entertained in the houses of their hearers. As some of these Gentlemen, who came down from England, went through the country, in a much more expensive manner than this small pittance would allow, I asked one of the Students how this might be accounted for. Ah! says he, these people are treated very differently from us; on our return we may get five pounds when they receive fifty or sixty.—They make a good job of itinerating.

⁸ Mr. Robert Haldane never preaches himself, but the Commentator had once the curiosity to go to hear his brother, Mr. James Haldane. The sermon was just what a rational person might anticipate, a most incoherent rhapsody, without any particular reference to the text. A little sense would indeed escape the Preacher at times, but he delighted in darkness and obscurity. It is astonishing, that this man should pretend to have any share in Christianity, who did not hesitate to go round the country preaching, before he had settled his own opinions. He and his brother were not content with separating themselves from the Kirk of Scotland, but they must form a party—they must take advantage of the weak and ignorant, to fill them with doubt and hesitation. None of the sects already established pleased them—they must form a new one: this they did in the most deceitful hypocritical manner. They pretended that the Society, which they had promoted for propagating the Gospel at Home, entertained no design of forming a new sect, but wished Christians of all denominations to unite in stirring up pure and undefiled religion. Now, that this is a lie,

An Aaron⁹ he, a Moses¹⁰ you have been.
How chang'd alas! by fortune trampled low,

That

may be proved from a thousand facts. They have formed a new sect, nay two or three sects, although they have failed to gratify their own ambition; and instead of peace, they have brought a sword. After filling the country with Churches, and placing in them ignorant fanatics or designing men as Preachers, and Office-bearers, (as they call them) the Messrs. Haldanes turn Anabaptists. We may safely infer from their past conduct, that their motives for this change were as corrupt as those which induced them to aspire to the direction of the Independents. In both cases, the greatest evil was done as far as they were capable of doing evil, to the true religion, by filling the christian world with division, and by raising among their own deluded followers and former associates, the most rancorous enmity. But what do these Saints (as they call themselves) care for the quarrels which they breed? When were they found to exercise forbearance and brotherly love? They now declare against all regular Ministry, and change their assemblies into brawls. Every man exhorts, preaches, and prays as he is moved—all decency, regularity, and order, are banished—gentleness, charity, and honesty, seem to have fled along with those exterior rules of propriety, which have been observed by Christians in all ages.

⁹ Mr. James Haldane is reckoned a great orator by his party, and most wonderfully gifted. He declaims against all establishments and all denominations. He walks not in fellowship with any that differ from him, even in the smallest matters; for he reckons small and great equal. He pays the same respect to anise and cummin, that he does to the weightier matters of the law. The mob attend to these declamations with pleasure, they love to hear their superiors slandered. To calumniate the Reformers, to

That Jade¹¹ who realms and sects can overthrow;
 The snuffy cobbler¹² now you mildly kiss,
 And Cowgate damsels chuckle at the bliss.

By

accuse them of errors, and to declare by word and deed, that no church but that over which he presides, possesses the truths necessary to salvation, is exceedingly grateful to the chosen few. Yet the passive observer might still doubt, whether Mr. James Haldane, if as eloquent, be wiser than Aaron; he has changed so often, that it would not be surprising to hear him declaiming on the excellence of Paine's Age of Reason, and worshipping the golden calf; and I make no doubt, but that his ingenuity would discover reasons for the change to edify the people.

¹⁰ MOSES.—Mr. F. Haldane possesses all the temporal influence—he lends money, settles with the Preachers, &c. Mr. James is satisfied with his spiritual dominion: he suggests new opinions—reprobates old ones. Some of the people get tired and break off; but honest Robert swears as he swears—rejects what he rejects—and believes what he believes. They have both the wonderful gift of believing whatever they wish to be true.

¹¹ JADE.—Fortune (or rather bad management) used the Brothers very ill, after all the pains they had taken to establish their authority over the various Churches which had been collected through their influence; she had the audacity to set up rivals against them, to raise up a spirit of Independence. Their influence was resisted. The democracy which they had cherished, recoiled upon themselves—they were unable to manage it, for the Preachers feeling their precarious situation, rebelled against their Masters.

¹² COBLER.—After the Holy Brothers despaired of shining on thrones like the Wesleys, they turned Anabaptists; but not satisfied with this, they discover that ancient Chris-

By frequent salivations render'd fair,
 They press your knees that envied bliss to share;
 And, liquorish fish, wives piously begin
 To think it sweeter than their morning gin.

In ninety-eight, while pond'ring in your breast,
 The dreadful gloom that circumscrib'd the East,
 A vision bade you drive it from the land,
 But dreams and visions Merchants vile withstand.
 If wealth, these worldlings cry, you have to spare,
 Let it at home derive some little share;
 In Britain thousands you may quickly find,
 To all the comforts of the Gospel blind.
 A spark will issue from a frigid stone,
 And sav'ry fatness from a dunghill bone;

So

tians frequently saluted one another with a holy kiss, and they fall to kissing; for according to their acute way of interpreting, which is to take the words according to their single literal interpretation, not to understand them by sentences, nor with a reference to the context, they think, that the same form of salutation is a Christian duty not to be neglected. Every person who is acquainted with the diseases, &c. common to such a large town, must acknowledge the boldness of this change; but if the Saints are infected by this carnal communication, they have the satisfaction to say, that it is in the way of their duty. It may appear ridiculous to the world, and even indecent, if practised in public, but what care they for public decency. We may expect to see these eminent Reformers discarding Marriages; for St. Paul very clearly prefers a single life, a sufficient warrant for those who take every expression in its literal insulated meaning. Why should the people of God be bound to one husband or to one wife? Above all, if it happen that one is an unbeliever, that is, goes to the Kirk, or, in the cant of the Ta-

So light from cold Directors¹³ here appear'd,
 You saw its beams although they only sneer'd,
 To Eden's Halls you hasten back with speed,

And

bernacle, to Babylon, and the other attends the Baptists, why should the believer be troubled with an unbelieving husband or wife? It is, however, to be hoped, that all friends to purity of manners will keep their wives and daughters at a respectable distance from this kissing assembly; and remembering the serious evils arising from the love feasts of the Methodists, consider every ceremony which immediately leads to evil as not from God. That the first converts, from the peculiar nature of their situations, surrounded by danger, and frequently few in number, might occasionally, when they met, adopt the mode of salutation common in their respective countries, is very probable; but that this same mode should be promiscuously adhered to, not occasionally, but every time the Church convened, is never to be credited, except by those who prefer licentiousness to purity. It might be worth while to notice, how much oftener the young and sprightly women will be saluted than the old and ugly, and to keep an exact register; the result would best expose this absurdity. I need not tell the jealous to beware of this new institution, they will at once perceive its turpitude; but may we not consider it impracticable? Suppose Mr. James Haldane's congregation to consist of five hundred persons, is the worthy pastor to slubber all those in turn, and they one another, several days would not suffice for the salutation; and then, what a conjunction of snuffy lips, snotty noses, foul breaths, ulcerous chops, &c. &c.: to confine the precept to kissing the next neighbour is ridiculous, it is general or nothing.

¹³ DIRECTORS.—Among christians there can be but one opinion respecting the conversion of Indians. Those who wish to stifle every attempt to remove the dreadful supersti-

And Ritchie¹⁴ call, a man of Gospel seed,
To bid the Holy Breth'ren, looking East,
Attend their pious Champion's new request.

The

tion that darkens the minds of this unhappy people, cannot repeat with sincerity the Lord's Prayer; and if the intemperate zeal of the persons who have undertaken to spread the Gospel in the East, should be attended with some dreadful catastrophe, the Directors will be chiefly to blame, since they have not employed men better qualified—men who would have tempered their zeal with prudence and sympathy—who would have, on all occasions, used only the language of conciliation, and made purer moral principles march before the light of the glorious dispensation which they revealed. It would have been an easy matter to have enlisted the present adventurers under any regular definite plan, and with proper direction and occasional checks, they might have been singularly useful. They are to be respected for the generous sacrifices which they have made; for their wonderful exertions in promoting the cause in which they are engaged. Their intentions are good, their principles not so free from error as might be wished, or with management they might have been rendered; nor has their conduct always been unexceptionable, for they are not always guided by discretion: but no one can justly despise what they have done till he has done more. That the Directors are not well qualified to decide, where religion and education are concerned, must appear evident, from their haste to destroy the noblest monument of Lord Wellesley's glorious administration. The College at Calcutta was highly beneficial in disseminating light and knowledge, morals and religion, through India; but the Merchants in Leadenhall Street look at the expence, not at the advantages. What do they care for India except as a source of wealth? To make christians of them yields no profit, why then

The Saints convene, and from your Popeship hear,
 That nigher home their souls may harvest cheer;
 Alas! my friends, behold the present race,
 They nothing know like us of special grace;
 Why should we then in Coromandel roam,
 Since Infidels and Heathens grow at home.
 The Savage wild who worships stocks and stones,
 Than native Heathens less deserve our groans;
 To rescue men befits our zealous toil,
 Who cherish darkness in a Gospel soil.
 Of liberal souls no sep'rate¹⁵ Sect we raise,

To

should they patronize it? Often hath the Kirk repented, that she had not used her influence to get Messrs. Haldanes and their friends shipped off to Coromandel; in that event, much evil must have been prevented, and many a pang to herself.

14 RITCHIE.—There is always something to attach particular tradesmen to new schemes. Mr. Ritchie is Secretary and Printer. The numerous tracts printed for the Society, their proceedings, the controversial pieces for defence and attack, and now the Scripture Magazine, convince this Saint that, in joining the Haldanites, he has not done amiss in the way of trade.

15 It might be doubted, by many well-meaning persons, whether the Society ever affirmed, that they had no intention of forming a separate sect, as they appear to busy themselves about nothing else—are collecting followers in every city, building churches, placing teachers over them, refusing the right hand of fellowship to those with whom they formerly associated, and shutting their pulpits against all those sects who were in the habit of opening theirs freely to them. Such a barefaced change, from public professions voluntarily made, has seldom been exhibited; and their

To all, if sound, we give our meed of praise ;
And if sweet bowels sermons can persuade,

From

impudence is only equalled by their hypocrisy. "The Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home was instituted from a conviction in the minds of the members, that sufficient means of religious instruction were not enjoyed in many parts of the country." From this extract from their proceedings in 1799, soon after they began their operations, the candid reader would suppose, that the first object of the association would be, to supply the means of religious instruction to those parts of the country where they were deficient. He would look for the establishment of Schools and Chapels in districts far removed from Parish Churches ; and, understanding the matter in this way, he would be ready to patronize an undertaking so useful. But what would the same person say, when he afterwards discovered, that instead of building Churches and establishing Schools in the unfrequented Districts of the Highlands, they were established in the most populous situations. That among all the Churches erected through the influence of this Society, there is not one built according to their professed design, nor one where it was necessary. After knowing this, would he hesitate to name such a Society hypocritical, who behave like the waterman in a boat, rowed one way and looked the other ? The same report farther states, that "they regretted also, that the extent of the Parishes in general, particularly in the Highlands, renders it hardly possible for a Minister, however faithful and laborious, to instruct his people in the manner he would wish." Now, what shall we say to the framers of this report, who have not built a single Church in those destitute places, and who proceed to blame the regular Clergy for neglect of duty and erroneous doctrine, because they do not believe their crude fanatical reveries. The report also remarks, that "they had no plan of forming a

From all we boldly hope some ghostly aid.
 Let hearty prayers and praises therefore rise,
 To rear and perfect this sublime empire,
 To send us Funds and Holy Gospel views,
 And eager Saints to spread the joyful news.
 In these sage thoughts the canting tribes agree,
 Tho' some reserves ¹⁶ were made for James and thee :
 And

new sect, but wished that Christians of all denominations should join in seeking to promote pure and undefiled religion." They have observed this promise as they have done the rest. They have built Independent or Baptist Chapels in almost every town—they have betrayed the sects who were the most friendly towards them—and they have acquired numbers by their hypocritical deportment and affected zeal. There are examples of Congregations, among the Sectaries, which have been entirely ruined and scattered since they commenced their operations, altogether by their management. It is well known, that the Independents never found any encouragement in Scotland, before Mr. Haldane and his friends began their career ; and so wedded were the Scotch to Presbytery, that no sect attached to a different form of Church Government had any chance of success. For this reason the Burghers, Anteburghers, and Relief, adopted the same polity with the Kirk, and differ more in name, and perhaps exterior deportment and empty pretensions to piety, than in doctrine.

¹⁶ It is notorious, that the two Brothers had the general direction of the Society ; every thing proceeded according to their wishes. Even, after Churches were built and regular Congregations were formed, they still (particularly Robert) possessed a secret influence, either by means of money or his power over the Preacher, by which all things were governed : alluding to this species of power, Mr. Ewing, in

And now the mighty plan begins to blaze,
 And through the nation darts its scorching rays;
 The darkness dissipates, and brings the day
 To many a filthy, rotten piece of clay.
 First Brother Anderson¹⁷ the work began,
 A zealot of the Anteburgher clan;

But

his "Attempt," page 116, observes—"The hostility of
 "some to the appointment of one Bishop in a Church, seems
 "to be entirely directed against the Bishop's office. They
 "have no objection, on general principles, to the exercise
 "of superior power by an individual in a church of Christ.
 "A person without office may have an effective though
 "nameless influence, not only in one but in fifty churches;
 "yet all is well." Before Mr. Ewing published this, know,
 gentle reader, that he had quarrelled with Mr. Haldane:
 contentions among the Saints bring Hypocrisy to light. We
 shall have occasion to notice the power of Pope Haldane
 again, and also Mr. Ewing and his book.

¹⁷ Magnus Anderson being recommended as a fit person
 to be employed, from the personal knowledge of some of
 the members, he was desired to come to Edinburgh for exa-
 mination. On his arrival, his attachment to the Ante-
 burgher Synod led him to prefer a proposal made him by
 that body to labour as a Catechist, under their direction.
 (See Narrative of the proceedings of the Society for 1798.)
 The revival of religion at Kirkwall, by means of the Ante-
 burghers, is mentioned, and many praises are bestowed on
 the Minister of that persuasion, who had preached with so
 much success as to render an addition to his Meeting-House
 necessary, in order to accommodate his increased congrega-
 tion. This was in the beginning of their career—it was
 then deemed prudent to conciliate the dissenters, and in this
 they were wonderfully successful.

But Erskine's seed his lib'ral efforts spurn,
 And threat'ning vengeance quicken his return.
 Next honest Ross,¹⁸ the cause to serve appears,
 A skilful Catechist not young in years,
 With laws of manners eager to dispense,
 And holdly careless where he gives offence:
 Like Donatists,¹⁹ this man is taught to hate
 The heedless crew not deem'd in Holy State;
 Offaithful Ministers appointed judge,²⁰

D

If

¹⁸ HUGH ROSS, the Catechist, was sent to Dunkeld; and although he had the impudence to take possession of a Church in which the Parochial Clergyman occasionally officiated, without deigning to ask his leave, the Society very readily excuse him, declaring, that he did it at the urgent request of the people, on account of the rain. They made a sort of apology to the Minister; but their relation of the matter is calculated to place the people and their regular pastor in opposition, and to represent the latter as an enemy to the dissemination of religious knowledge. This we shall find to be the conduct of the Society uniformly, in respect to the Establishment.

¹⁹ DONATISTS were a sect very similar in their notions to the Haldanites, and their former associates, not so much on account of their dangerous and pernicious principles, as their maintaining that their own community was the true, the pure and Holy Church, and avoiding all communication with other Churches, from an apprehension of contracting their impurity and corruption—this is the source of their shocking uncharitableness and presumption.

²⁰ JUDGE.—The Itinerants were instructed, “not to shew a preference to any denomination of Christians, either established or dissenting, but to exhort the people to attend wherever the Gospel is preached in purity.” By rule third,

If converts made, no Gospel aid to grudge.
 Oh! happy day, that gave great Haldane²¹ birth,
 A happier ne'er embrac'd this fruitful earth;
 For zeal and talents in your conduct shone,
 And truth remov'd the veil that hid her throne.

Behold

"they are to endeavour to strengthen the hands of all faithful Ministers of Jesus Christ, of whatever denomination, and as far as they can, discourage all bitter party spirit, wherever they discover it among Christians." These two directions virtually appointed these itinerants Judges of all the regular Clergy of Scotland, whether of the Establishment or of the Secession; and in explaining them, the Society advise the itinerants to hear such Ministers only as preach evangelical doctrine: and again they are told, "in the neighbourhood of many places, through which you pass, there may be Churches of some denomination where the Gospel is preached. Endeavour to get accurate information as to this; and press upon all to whom you have access, the necessity of attending on Divine Ordinances." Here we have a regiment of privileged spies sent through the country, who seldom find a single Clergyman doing his duty. Every place is destitute, no Gospel, no light. Suppose a Clergyman, in the course of his Lectures, should be commenting on the marriage feast of Cana of Galilee, which the Lord beautified with his presence, and taking occasion to state to his hearers the difference between innocent and criminal enjoyments—that the former were increased, and the latter only condemned by Christianity, which was far from discouraging social pleasures, one of the Judges, after hearing this, would have immediately issued forth and told the people, that they were hearing damnable doctrines—that the Minister was exhorting them to riotous living, to criminal indulgences. Now, gentle reader, this supposition was actually realized: and Clergymen were branded for preaching

Behold what glad commotions fill the land,
 As South and North you stretch your ruffled hand;
 Ten thousands quaff the living draught of life,
 Whose days had roll'd in darkness, vice, and strife.
 The prating Tailor leaves the goose profane,
 To preach the word, and Atheists to restrain;
 The Blacksmith stretches forth his sooty jaws,
 And bellows loud in Zion's holy cause;
 The whining Cobler drops his shining awl,
 And bids the crowd remember Adam's fall;
 Intrepid Sweeps the sacred Pulpits reach,
 And drunken Sailors hold their quids and preach;
 The knottiest texts with daring force expound,
 No doubts deter, no mysteries confound;
 Let wicked Priests, by trembling caution tied,
 Abstruse doctrines from the vulgar hide.

D 2

A preach.

against idleness, drunkenness—or, in fact, for preaching upon any other topics than Justification, Faith, Grace, the Corruption of the Will, the necessity of Redemption: they never mention the conditions of salvation, never put their followers in mind, that without Holiness no man can see the Lord.

21 HALDANE.—Well may the Poet break out in this strain, if it were true, as the various Journals of the Itinerants assert, that they were the happy instruments of first spreading the light of the Gospel through the country. Alas! unhappy Scotland! Ignorant of the Christian Religion for eighteen centuries, and at last enlightened by a few sapient Preachers who had devoted themselves a few months to prepare for this arduous undertaking, men who followed the plough, made shoes or ropes, till Haldane called them to become fishers of men.

A preaching-jobber no such prudence knows,
 No qualms or doubts his crazy march oppose;
 With brother tradesmen loudly all proclaim,
 Their long possession of the holy flame.
 To preach inspir'd, the darkest texts unfold,
 And from them draw sweet evangelic gold;
 And surely truth must hang upon their voice,
 Since thousands at each holy word rejoice;
 Deep groans, responding harbingers of good,
 By Wesley nam'd conversions early brood.

Now brother Ballantine,²² bright learning's foe,
 The

²² BALLANTINE.—This Gentleman appears to be one of the greatest pillars of this connexion, and a sturdy polemic. He tells Mr. Ewing, in a printed letter, "As you have called on Churches to have Seminaries of Education for the Ministry of the Gospel, I would entreat you, consider that there is no warrant for them in the word of God—that they are the inventions of men, and destructive to Christianity. I would also beseech them to walk in the commandments and ordinances of Christ for their edification, which if they do, they may rest assured, that they will of themselves discover, that Schools of Divinity are altogether foreign to the nature of Christ's kingdom." Again he says, "I am fully persuaded, that not one Seminary of the kind has any scriptural authority for its basis: there is not, so far as I can see, a single sentence in all the word of God, for erecting, supporting, and regulating such Seminaries;" and he concludes them contrary to the will of God. Again "if divinity Schools are not of Divine appointment, their tendency will be found to partake of their nature. This is fully verified by the fact. All that is peculiar to Divinity Schools of what kind soever, model it in what way you please, goes

The scrip and staff assumes abroad to go
 As spring peeps forth, to sow in Gospel soil
 Dull pamphlets dealing, preaching every mile.
 O Kerriemuir,²³ thou vile benighted place,
 Great need hast thou to pray for special grace;
 Not David meek with sermons three hours long,
 Can settle Ballantine's accusing tongue.
 Alas! that Inverury²⁴ ne'er could vaunt,

D 3

One

to make a Clergyman a being that ought to have no place in the Church of God." Will the reader believe that, notwithstanding all this, Mr. Ballantine was very desirous of becoming that being, called a Clergyman, and did not scruple to intrude himself upon a foolish Congregation at Elgin, by hollow professions, which being afterwards discovered, they thrust him out. Poor Ewing! thou hast got into sad company. When Mr. Robertson, in his excellent Pamphlet on Lay Preaching, asserted that you and your associates were patrons of ignorance and even enemies to learning, you reply with fury, that you are far from disregarding the advantages of learning: yet Mr. Ballantine was at that time one of the chosen of your brethren. But more on this subject.

²³ KERRIEMUIR.—"Thursday, April 19th, arrived at Kerriemuir. Preached to between 700 and 800 at the Cross, who heard with much attention although the day was very cold. They seemed to see the propriety of Sabbath-day Schools. Distributed among them a few plans and pamphlets. The Lord visit this benighted place."—Ballantine's Journal, 1798.

²⁴ INVERURY.—Arrived at half past five. Wished to give intimation immediately of Sermon. Happily disappointed, on hearing that a Burgher Minister was to preach this night in the Methodist Chapel. Heard him preach, and

One holy man or e'en a sinning saint;
 Thou stupid Dingwall,²⁵ bears't the dismal bell,
 O teeming careless, dead!y mouth of Hell.
 With zeal our Brother in the work proceeds,
 And daily proofs evince the spirit's deeds;
 The rabble throw their moral burden down,

And

intimated, that there would be sermon to-morrow, half past nine. Distributed a few pamphlets at the meeting-house door. The people and especially the children, shy in taking them. Understood they had been forbidden to take them by their teacher, who is also assistant in the Kirk. Wednesday, April 25th, preached here (Inverury) in the morning, at half past nine, to about 50 people in the Methodist Chapel. The young seemed very particularly attentive. After Sermon related to them the nature and ends of the Society. No Sabbath School here. Held up to the serious now hearing, the deplorable and stupid state of the people of this place. Charged them with culpable neglect. Exhorted them to awake from their slumbers, and make attempts to save the sinners around them by Schools and Prayer-meetings open to all. May the Lord send his quickening grace to this dead spot." Ballantine's Journal, 1798.

²⁵ "Thursday, May 17, came to Dingwall. Preached in a back-green to between 400 and 500 people. An amazing stupidity in this place as to the Gospel." Similar extracts might be made from the same Journal. In one place he tells us, that the children meet in the woods for prayer, and where he is not successful he takes care to brand the place. Now, it is evidently a proof of the good sense of the inhabitants, when they left him to rave alone, or heard him with indifference; for what these people teach for Christianity, is no more real Christianity than the Doctrines of the Koran. People of good education, and who had been at the pains to read their Bibles, perceived this at once.

And seek, on easier terms, a Heavenly Crown.
 O did you hear, they cry, the Sermon, Sir,
 Among our neighbours what a mighty stir,
 This Angel Ballantine from scripture brags
 That works are dead, cold morals filthy rags.²⁶

Sweet Brother Rate²⁷ in women boasts of skill,
 The slanderers cry he has a carnal will ;

With

²⁶ RAGS.—These Preachers never exhort the people to purify their hearts, and to give proofs of their faith by the excellence of their lives. They never tell them, that the only measure of faith is good works; on the contrary, morality is thrown on the back ground, it is degraded. "Think not foolishly (says Burder in his Village Sermons) to mend yourselves and then come to him; you will never be better till you do come."

"Come needy, come guilty, come loathsome and bare,

"You can't come too filthy, come just as you are."

²⁷ RATE.—This Gentleman, from England, was requested to Itinerate in Fifeshire: he was one of those who were well paid. The writer of this Commentary heard him, and was less pleased than with Mr. James Haldane: he preached for the first time, that there were degrees of nonsense. As to the number of hearers published in the Journals, the Reader will come nearer the truth to divide them by three or four. If the itinerant say he preached to 900 people, say 300; if to 300, say 100; even then the number will be exaggerated. Mr. Rate's exertions were chiefly successful among the women. At Aberdour, there was a woman who gave very pleasing evidences of her being affected with the word. At West Wemyss, he went and visited a woman distressed, and apparently much concerned under the sense of her spiritual danger. Endeavoured to explain to her the

With ghostly consolations he can quiet
 The qualms of girls, whose flesh is running riot.
 O Leven²⁸ thy profanity excels,
 And from an Angel's mouth the curse impels :
 In Crail²⁹ the Preacher works with mighty force,
 And

Gospel. Called upon another woman in the last stage of a consumption, who wished much to see me ; she was deplorably ignorant, and was angry with me for asking her, if she was an enemy to God : she replied, hate God ! no, I am sure I never hated him. I then asked her, if she had always loved him with all her heart, and soul, and mind, and strength ? She replied, she had ; and that the thoughts of God were never a moment out of her mind. After saying a number of things to her, prayed and departed. Again, a young person came to talk with me about her soul ; she seemed to be pious. An elderly woman, who had come all the way from Leven, expressed much satisfaction in what she heard, and said, she saw things in another light, from what she heard, than before.

²⁸ LEVEN.—This place seems deplorably dead in respect to Religion. Every exertion to promote religion is much reproached. The number of illegitimate children, in this place, gives an awful view of its depravity of manners. A person guilty of such acts of sin is seldom or ever called before the Church, but is admitted to the Lord's Table, after some slight satisfaction to the Session. He is equally severe upon other places : but how came he to get all this information as he was only a traveller ? He must have been inquiring into the private scandal of the inhabitants.

²⁹ May 29, preached this evening at Crail, to a good congregation of about 400 people, who were very attentive. The Minister of the parish there heard the most part of the time. After sermon he came and shook hands with me, said

And courtly Bell³⁰ commends the holy course.
 On Kettle³¹ next he looks with dismal grief,
 No light he sees except in cold Relief.
 O Bennet,³² thy rough probity is strange,
 With evil company thou need'st must range ;
 Yet truth this saint to sectaries confines,
 A little truth from such in splendour shines.
 Thus helter skelter fiery Preachers run,
 To rant and rave to wretches near undone ;
 Grave Ewing³³ joins the tribe, his oath abjures,

A better

that these were the doctrines he was accustomed to preach to his people, and that he was glad to hear such instructions given to them.

³⁰ BELL, the Minister of Crail, a slave to popularity, but too timid to go all lengths—he is neither cold nor hot.

³¹ KETTLE.—Mr. Rate compliments the Relief Minister, who was a well meaning, but a very weak man ; and, as usual, says nothing of the Parish Clergyman, a gentleman in every respect greatly superior to the other.

³² BENNET.—This Gentleman says, that he feels much less satisfaction in a Church than when addressing a small Congregation out of doors ; because those who assemble in a house, where the Gospel is statedly preached, are not such as need the labours of Missionaries : while the strangers, who are attracted by a Sermon out of doors, are frequently persons who never otherwise hear the Gospel, This is, on the whole, the most liberal observation that I have found in any of the Journals of the itinerants. Mr. Bennet is rather honest for an itinerant.

³³ EWING has lately become ashamed of his hypocritical associates, and they are as much ashamed of him. We shall soon have occasion to speak of him more freely. At

A better living conscience smiles secures:
 Benighted souls about Dunkeld³⁴ he finds,
 And from her spouse a crazy wife unbinds.
 Let wise Relief and Burghers³⁵ dark relate,

The

this time he was a new convert, he had made his bargain with Mr. Haldane, forsaken the whore of Babylon, and was anxious to shew his zeal; he goes, therefore, on a preaching tour: but the only thing remarkable in his Journal is the circumstance mentioned in the text.

³⁴ DUNKELD.—“After leaving Auchtergaven, was much affected at meeting a woman in the road who was in tears, because her husband, she said, had refused to let her attend the sermon. She seemed deeply concerned for the salvation of her soul, but much afraid of drawing near to God while such a sinner; she was, moreover, heart broken by her husband, who prevented her from her hearing either the Itinerants or the Seceders, to the last of whom she said she was indebted for any knowledge she had of the Gospel. Gave her a tract on the importance of family religion, and desired her to shew it to her husband; but she said, she durst not: she had got some tracts before, but was obliged to read them by stealth. Endeavoured to speak comfortably to her both about her fears as a sinner and her domestic trials—promised to pray for her—have not been so much affected for a long time. How many despise the ordinances of Christ, while this poor woman would be glad to hear one sermon, if it were even by stealth. May the Lord bring her soul out of prison, and make me as earnest and desirous to preach as she seems to be to hear.” There is more canting and whining in Ewing’s than in any of the Journals: he was a new convert, and it was necessary to be loud. We shall make Mr. Haldane judge of his sincerity a little farther on.

³⁵ RELIEF and BURGHES.—Nothing could be more short-sighted than the conduct of the Scotch Seceders to-

The joy with which those preaching sons they met,
 Assisting foes to Scotland's ancient Kirk,
 The fatten'd Clergy shall no longer smirk ;
 The crazy Beldame totters to her fall,
 The sects combin'd shall raze her hollow wall.
 O silly fools ! Great Haldane's³⁶ mind conceives

Your

wards these itinerants. They received them with open arms—introduced them to their Churches—allowed them to preach to their people—caressed, praised, and encouraged them. This became an excellent introduction : it gave the travelling preachers opportunities of insinuating their own principles—of recommending that religious democracy, which obtains in all the Churches which they have collected. That the Seceders were blinded by their hatred to the Establishment is evident, or they would have discovered the intentions of the Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home ; but they received their Preachers as auxiliaries against the Kirk, nor did they perceive their error till they saw their congregations melting away. Then, indeed, they felt what they ought to have seen long before, that these vagrant sermon-brokers were enemies to all regular order and subordination, that they were commonly without education, and therefore generally without principle. I have often wondered, that the Relief Congregations do not form themselves into Chapels of Ease ; for, as they differ in nothing from the Establishment except in the article of Patronage, the moment that the Presbytery, in whose bounds they happen to be placed, is willing to receive them as a Chapel of Ease, with the power of electing their own Minister, they have no reason for continuing separate : but it is one thing to profess principles, and a very different thing to act up to them.

³⁶ GREAT HALDANE.—It is probable, that the Seceders were deceived by an assertion of the Society in their address,

Your ruin too, from which no aid reprieves ;
 The Kirk³⁷ alarm'd, in furious haste proclaims
 Her deadly hate to Haldane's pious schemes :

Derides

dated Edinburgh, Jan. 1798.—“ In employing Itinerants, Catechists, or others, we do not consider ourselves as conferring ordination upou them, or appointing them to the Pastoral office.” But this promise was observed as they observed the rest ; every Missionary Magazine announced ordinations in different parts of the country, the congregations in many instances being formed exclusively from among the Dissenters. It had a fine sound to profess equal regard to all denominations, and the people were also pleased with the seeming disinterestedness of the Preachers, for they took no money. This circumstance was very pernicious to the Seceding Clergy, for their congregations are continually quarrelling with them about their stipends ; but now they found the gospel preached for nothing—a sure proof of the superiority of the new comers, both in doctrines and godliness. But notwithstanding all this, the Seceders did not waken from their slumbers—till the Kirk sounded the trumpet of alarm.

³⁷ THE KIRK ALARMED—The common people are always inclined to side with those Preachers, who pretend to have found a short road to Heaven. The success, therefore, of the itinerants sent out by the Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home roused the General Assembly, and induced that venerable body to publish a Pastoral Admonition, to be read by the Clergy in all the Parish Churches in Scotland. This Address, after adverting to the peril of the times, and the dangerous opinions which have been propagated of late, the terrible revolution which they have produced in a neighbouring nation, &c. turns with sorrow to a set of men whose proceedings threaten no small disorder to the country. This set of men, assuming the name of the

Derides the stupid fry you send abroad
To preach and pray, yet know not what is God.

Reli-

Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home, send out itinerants, who are justly accused as setting themselves as superintendants of those who are established the teachers of religion by the Church—erecting Sunday Schools without authority—committing the care of them to ignorant persons, and connecting these schools with secret meetings, assembling people in the fields, pouring forth loose harrangues, and freely censuring the doctrine or the character of the Minister of the Parish—alienating the minds of the people, and inducing them to leave the Church. It then proceeds to warn the people against those ignorant men, who have given no pledge of the soundness of their faith, or the correctness of their morals, and not to prefer them to the regular Clergy, who must give full security on all these things: and while it wishes to judge charitably, and to admit, that there may be well meaning persons connected with this scheme, it asserts, that they must have been deceived, since the whole discovers more of ambition and vanity, and of a desire to claim a lordly dominion over your faith, than of the Spirit of the Gospel, which is a meek, an humble, and a peaceable spirit, and a spirit of order not of confusion; and the manifest tendency of the scheme is to foster the violence of a blind intemperate zeal, to unsettle the minds of many, to throw their principles loose, by distracting them with novelties, and to make them to become like clouds without water, carried about of winds. It then accuses them of enmity to the Ecclesiastical Establishment, and suspects their Political Principles. This Pastoral Admonition, which was issued in the summer of 1799, has been so accurately verified in every particular, by the conduct of this famous Society and its associates, that, except in the article of Politics, the whole may be considered a history of facts.

Religious democrates, to order foes,
Must soon, she roars, the civil power oppose;

And

A great outcry was indeed raised against this Admonition, by those who conceived themselves pointed at in its contents. That sage Apostle of ignorance and fanaticism, Mr. Rowland Hill, in one of his Journals, published the same year, remarks, that when he arrived in Edinburgh, Friday, June 7th, "he found all the city quite thunderstruck, at the fulminating Bull just uttered against us from the General Assembly. And no wonder at the temporary panic, as the public must have conceived no body of people could presume to bring forward such pointed and direct accusations, affecting even our lives, unless they had some foundation for their charges. Four times have they been challenged with uttering the most gross and scandalous falsehoods: first, by the Society as a body; secondly, by Mr. Burder of Coventry, then on a visit to Edinburgh; next by Mr. Ewing of Glasgow; and lastly, by their humble Admirer, the Author of these Sheets. Nor have I heard that they have come forward, in one single instance, to vindicate themselves in their wanton and cruel allegations against us, or in their scandalous imposition on the public, by spreading such a false alarm against a people the most innocent and peaceable in their designs." The reader will be astonished at the matchless impudence of this paragraph, when he finds every allegation made by the General Assembly proved to be true; but our astonishment at the actions of these pretended Saints ceases, when we become a little better acquainted with them. Keeping of promises or attending to morality, &c. &c. are duties below their notice. If Mr. Hill did not possess a conscience endowed with the qualities of Indian Rubber, he would blush at the recollection of the remarks which I have quoted from his pamphlet, and even feel the greatest shame and compunction, were it possible for a Saint like

And'gender fierce contention through the land,
A proof that Satan holds them in command.

Her

[him so to feel, at the note appended to them, at the foot of this page. "Three reasons alone can be assigned for their conduct; madness, malice, or an attempt to discover our treasonable plots: and the first of these reasons should seem the most probable, the Admonition being dated on the day of the New Moon." But without stopping longer on this Spiritual Swindler, I shall prove the different charges contained in the Pastoral Admonition, by facts which will admit of no contradiction. These charges may be reduced to three—1st, Enmity to the Church Establishment; 2d, The glaring ignorance of the Itinerants; 3d, The political tendency of their conduct and opinions.

FIRST—ENMITY TO THE CHURCH ESTABLISHMENT.

"A separate and distinct order of men in Society, created by official situation in a Church of Christ, is something entirely foreign to the New Testament dispensation."—View of Social Worship, by Mr. James Haldane, page 278. After illustrating at great length what he calls the evils of an Establishment, he asks, page 429, but are there no advantages attending a civil religious establishment? Does Religion gain nothing by the support of Government? Does it not give respectability to Religion and to its Ministers? Alas! this it does communicate in the eyes of worldly men: but by means of this, it only lays a stumbling block in their way, and leads them to mistake its nature. It adds indeed to the sanctions of Religion—sanctions which are better calculated to affect mankind while they do not believe the Gospel. But such sanctions, however necessary to civil laws, ought to have no place, for they can have no good effect in religion. Again, page 414.—Dissenters, who do not see the evil of the connexion between the Church and State, are led to look with a jealous eye on the loaves and fishes of which

Her sons she warns to shun the preaching crew,
 Who dare in streets and lanes their poison spue ;
 The

they are deprived, &c. Quotations might be multiplied to any extent, as the whole Treatise evinces the most cool and deliberate hostility to established Churches. This writer is indeed too weak to be formidable, and so fickle in his religious opinions, that we may soon expect to see him a stern advocate for Establishments ; as yet, however, we must proceed without the aid of his superior talents, for he tells us, in a late publication, that Infant Baptism naturally leads to a National Church, like that of Israel of old, from whom it is borrowed. Mr. R. Haldane, in his letters to Mr. Ewing, page 40, says, " I began with observing the Lord's Supper, while you (Mr. Ewing) occasionally presided at that service, before you was appointed the Elder of any Church ; or, if you once had obtained ordination in what you then called Babylon, and from the hands of such as you speak of as unconverted, or unfit to belong to any Church, or to observe any ordinance, you had afterwards fully removed it, by becoming an individual member in what you deemed a Church of Christ, and had completely divested yourself of the office of Bishop, by choosing a Pastor over you." Again, in the next page, he tells Mr. Ewing—" you (viz. Mr. Ewing) was for several years a Minister of the Church of Scotland, and afterwards came out of it, declaring it was Babylon." To be sure Mr. Ewing was an apostate, and might be expected to hate the church which he had left. Yet, after giving these little specimens of enmity mentioned by Mr. Haldane, he prints a pamphlet containing the following assertions : " I am a Dissenter, but a Dissenter and an undermining Dissenter are as different as a Churchman and a persecuting Churchman. When I hear of plots and conspiracies against the Church and State, of engines to sap the foundations of the one and attempts to undermine the con-

The Clergy haste the mandate to obey,
And preach anathemas without delay.

E

New

stitution of the other, and when these diabolical works of darkness are imputed to me either directly or consequentially, not by the irreligious, but by men who profess to be the disciples of Christ, and of some of whom I have been accustomed to hope better things—then, indeed, it is only on the history of my blessed Saviour that I can find at once a parallel to my injury, and an effectual relief from my excruciating pain.”—Ewing’s animadversions on Mr. Robertson’s pamphlet, pages 13, 14. This gentleman was conscious, at the moment he was making this impious comparison between his sufferings and those of our blessed Lord, that he was using the inveterate expressions that Mr. Haldane mentions against the Establishment, and taking every opportunity to inveigh against her. But what could be expected of a man who had publicly falsified his oath, and who to this day appears to have no fixed opinions upon religious subjects, and even upon Church Government? Mr. Ballantine says, in one of his pamphlets, that every thing in a Church of Christ, which discovers that its members bestow honours, distinctions, and authority on their Elders, such as worldly societies do on their Clergymen, evinces that they are so far Antichristian. Indeed, this Gentleman not only condemns all established Churches, but all preparation for the Ministry. As the Messrs. Haldanes, Mr. Ewing, and Mr. Ballantine, were the most ostensible men in the Society, and as they are found, by the quotations now given from their books, to be inveterate against the Establishment, the first charge of the Pastoral Admonition is proved: indeed it was fully justified by the Society’s instructions to their Preachers, by which a greasy Weaver was transformed into an inspector of the Clergy. Moreover, there is not a single travelling Journal, published by any of the Prea-

New tropes and figures angry wits inspire,
Which give new fuel to the blazing fire ;

To

chers, which does not prove the charge. Every occasion is officiously taken to lower the Establishment in the public opinion, and to degrade the character and office of the Parochial Clergy.

**SECOND—THE GLARING IGNORANCE OF THE
ITINERANTS.**

When Mr. Robertson, in his pamphlet, proceeded upon the assumption, that the defenders of Lay Preaching were Patrons of ignorance, and even enemies to learning, Mr. Ewing replies with great warmth, that the accusation was unfounded. But events have verified the charge of the Pastoral Letter and Mr. Robertson's opinion, and proved how ignorant Mr. Ewing was of the charges meditated by his new associates. It appears from his late publication, entitled "an Attempt," that he has discovered that his friends, Messrs. Haldanes and Ballantine, are truly the Apostles of ignorance; for he is at great pains to shew that learning, mere human learning, is essentially necessary for a Bishop, or (as he means) a Clergyman. In page 57, he says, is now publicly recommended to the Churches to lay no stress upon learning at all; to confine themselves to such teachers as they can find among themselves, whether learned or unlearned; nay, to unite purposely in the same office, some of the one description and some of the other. What a monstrous scheme of ignorance and confusion is this? Is it not high time to change our course, and instead of trying how little preparation will answer a supposed exigency, to inquire how much preparation we are able to provide? Our inquiries on this point will not fail to be encouraging. In this much favoured country, Pastors will find but little difficulty in superintending the education of students. What is rarely the case any where else, the public seminaries are

To vile Celeno,³⁸ Haldane they compare,
By Harpies followed, odious to the stare,

B 2

Whose

here opened to people of every religious persuasion, for no subscription of articles is required of the scholar. In short, the means of knowledge are so abundant, and so easy of access, that it must be owing to the wilful negligence of Churches of all descriptions, if they do not procure for those who are to teach among them, an education as thorough and extensive as is afforded to any class of men in any nation upon earth. Again, page 58—the training of young people for the Ministry is treated by many with such sovereign contempt, that some perhaps will think it foolish to venture to plead for the practice. In page 59—it is to be feared, that one reason why the affectation of despising learning is so popular with many is, the prevalence of pride and covetousness in the human heart. Men are not naturally fond of feeling the superiority of others in any respect : they are, therefore, under a temptation of keeping all around down to their own level, although it should even be to their own disadvantage to do so. Besides, learning is attended with some expence, and many are disposed to think, that any plan which promises to diminish expence is, of course, an improvement. It is not much to be wondered at that those Christians, who are unacquainted with the thing which they disregard, should undervalue learning; but when men, who have any portion of it themselves, seem disposed to encourage the ignorant in their prejudice, the circumstance is extraordinary indeed. In common cases, knowledge is accompanied by the love of knowledge, and a desire to diffuse and increase it; and we are accustomed to think people far gone in the progress of barbarism, who are willing to countenance contempt for information. So far Mr. Ewing pleads for a learned Clergy; yet this is the very man who conceived, that fifteen months or two years was a sufficient time, and who actually undertook to transform

Whose filthy touch the purest breast defiles,
And pleasing fruit of precious value spoils.

Thus

Ploughmen into Preachers in that short period. He pretends indeed a necessity for this, as so many Churches were forming in the country; but observe what Mr. Robert Haldane says to this supposed necessity, at page 34th of his letters to Mr. Ewing. You assign a reason for the short period allotted for the education of Preachers—here, I am concerned to say, you have not adhered to the fact. We were not tempted to fix a short period of preparation, when many churches were forming, or in any way to yield to the pressure of temporary circumstances. There was not one church formed when the length of the course was fixed. But do you not recollect, that fifteen months was the period of education first fixed upon, and that in the view of no more being given, you readily undertook the charge of the Students? Do you remember, that in conversing with them for admittance, you told them, that fifteen months was the period assigned; that it was enough for them; and if that was not sufficient, they were unfit for the work? And I recollect well, that when I proposed to increase the time to two years, you observed, that in that time they would be very well instructed indeed. Here we find Mr. Haldane giving Mr. Ewing the lie direct; and if we believe him, it was Mr. Ewing himself that patronised this ignorance. It is true, he comes forward to plead for learning, but this might arise, not so much from a change of opinion, as from the fear of being reduced to a common hearer; for Mr. Ballantine, who ridicules learning in preachers, and declaims against all preparation, in which he seems to be joined by both the Messrs. Haldanes, thinks every Male in a Congregation has an equal right to discharge all those duties which we think belong exclusively to Clergymen. Mr. Ewing makes a miserable figure in the midst of these exhorters and

Thus Harpy Preachers through the country yell,
And in each Parish leave their noxious smell;

E 3

The

expounders; and when he looks around him, on the herd of Preachers and Office-bearers belonging to the Churches in connexion, he must be ashamed of the mass of ignorance, stupidity, conceit, and self-sufficiency. We have already noticed Mr. Ballantine's hostility to learning—poor man, he despises what he cannot appreciate. A better proof, because more forcibly convincing, may be had by any person of common understanding, who will take the trouble to hear one of the fraternity preach a Sermon. That they assigned fifteen months to the preparation for the Ministry, sufficiently proves the truth of the second charge of the Pastoral Admonition.

THIRD—THE POLITICAL TENDENCY OF THEIR CONDUCT
AND OPINIONS.

The Society published a Reply to the Pastoral Admonition, in the Missionary Magazine for July 1799, which consists of nothing but assertions. They deny the charges made against them by the General Assembly, at the same time that they were conscious, that every one of them could be proved from the Journals of their itinerants. The inhabitants (says Mr. Taylor in his Journal) of Grangeons are numerous; many of them go no where to public worship, and none of them can hear salvation by grace through Christ published where it ought to be. Again, visited a poor dying woman, with whom I conversed—pointed out Christ to her, and then commended her to God in prayer. I asked her if her Parish Minister frequently visited her: she answered that he had been once. In this way they become spies upon the regular Clergy, treasure up every malicious report against them, and make reports when it suits their purposes; and yet they have the effrontery to say, that they have no enmity to the Establishment. And in regard to Politics, at

The terrors spread, dull Antiburghers³⁹ groan,
They sought the Gospel, and they found a stone.

The

the close of this very reply, they call upon such of their Catechists as have not taken the oaths to Government, to repair immediately to the nearest Magistrate in order to take them: by which they virtually prove the allegation made against them, as no such call was issued, till after the accusation was made. Mr. Haldane's political opinions having been formerly more than suspected, he thought it prudent to publish an Address to the Public, in which it appears, that till the 29th Nov. 1798, his opinions might have been justly suspected. On that day he acquired new light from Mr. Ewing's Sermon, and in 1800 he declares himself a peaceable and loyal subject; adding, that he would be so under any Government upon earth. But who was to know that this change of political sentiments had taken place in his mind, and were not his former opinions and conduct strongly calculated to raise suspicion, and something even more certain than mere suspicion? The General Assembly had received no pledge of his loyalty—the public received none—he allowed a year to elapse before he printed his Address. It is also to be remarked, that the Admonition of the venerable Assembly had nothing to do with persecution, it was merely a warning to their people, not to allow themselves to be drawn away by travellers assuming the name of Preachers, and spreading their peculiar tenets as the word of God. But the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel at Home studiously confound this warning with persecution: they go round the country speaking against the Clergy, acting as spies upon their conduct, railing occasionally against them at their very door, promoting dissensions in Parishes: and, because the Clergy expose them, they cry out Persecution, Persecution. They are desirous to persecute, they begin the attack—they proceed coolly to undermine a most

The cordial friends, whom they receiv'd with joy,
As fellow servants in Divine employ,

Whose

respectable class of men, to make them contemptible in the eyes of their hearers; and because these men act upon the defensive, they are loud in proclaiming their sufferings. It is not toleration that these men want, it is the power to persecute, to ruin the established Church. The allies of this famous Society in London sent out a Mr. Bentom to Quebec, who not only resisted the law, insulted all the respectable people of the Government, but actually libelled the Courts and Public Officers in the most wanton manner. But if a standing Ministry be one of the beauties of Christianity, and if it be true, that the influence of a respectable Clergy is of the greatest utility, not only as it respects the private happiness of the people, but the public comfort and security of the society, any schemes which tend, directly or indirectly, to destroy this influence, are inimical to Government. They breed licentiousness of opinion, they make the common people disputers, and not religious—unsteady in their faith, or rather of no faith. Being relieved from these checks which used to restrain them, they become immoral, and immoral men are always bad subjects. The people (says the *Missionary Magazine*, for October 1798,) of Wick and Thurso chuse rather to travel many miles to hear the doctrines of the Cross of Christ, than to attend in their Parish Churches, where they are usually entertained with empty harangues, quite foreign from the nature of the Gospel of Christ.

⁵⁸ CELENO, the chief of the Harpies. They emitted an infectious smell, and spoiled whatever they touched by their filth and excrements.—*Virg. Æn. iii. v. 212.*

⁵⁹ ANTIBURGHERS are the most intolerant of all the Seceders—they seem to think, that “love your neighbour”

Whose powers they wish most feelingly to join
 With theirs, the sacred Kirk to undermine,
 Are sly pilf'ring half their sober flocks,
 And mildly terming it conversion strokes.
 The dismal Synod meets, no doves are there,
 The wily serpent too is something rare.
 Alas! they sigh, what bandage dimm'd our eyes,
 That none could see these Hypocrites disguise:
 To stamp on order is their fav'rite aim,
 Our broken Congregations mark our shame.
 No sect we form, we preach the Gospel free,
 No Churches build, for travellers are we:
 No profit take, that pois'ner of the breast,
 We freely give what freely we've possest.
 Such were the dogmas of this wicked race,
 When first they came to preach of guilt and grace;
 Alas! our sins deserve this public shame,
 The rules are broke, our fickle souls condemn.

Hold

is a wrong translation, and ought to be hate your neighbours; upon this excellent precept they found their conduct. In May 1799, they published a Synodical Act against the Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home, and declared promiscuous hearing inadmissible. To shew what an intolerant sect this is, we have only to mention their treatment of Mr. William Grimmon, for the great crime of hearing his son, a Minister in the Relief Church, preach: because this aged Gentleman, now in the 83d year of his age, would not submit to a rebuke in the name and by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, for this great iniquity, they drove him from their communion, after having been with them half a century. In condemning the Society and their associates, I am not obliged to approve of the intolerance of other sects.

Hold fast the truth, our sober fathers said,
 Promiscuous hearing brethren always dread ;
 It is of sacred purity the bane,
 Avoid all commerce with the world profane.
 Hear Brethren only, never dare to go
 To neighb'ring Churches strange conceits to know ;
 None else our Chairs of Verity should hold,
 Except the Parson's nurtur'd in our fold.
 These laws we break, our sacred Pulpits lend
 To zealots vile, who ghostly pow'rs pretend ;
 They steal our people's hearts with cunning wiles,
 The wicked laugh, and powerful Satan smiles.
 These calumnies and fears, and groans and lies,
 Raise in your Christian bosom no surprise:⁴⁰

The

⁴⁰ Mr. Haldane and his brethren affect a most wonderful humility and forbearance. When we consider their publications, we should be apt to think James and Robert paragons of meekness, and that in their own Church every person was upon an equal footing. Know then, reader, that this is far from being the case. Every measure is carefully prepared, and its success insured by the two Brethren, before it is brought forward—the whole is secretly managed. Two young men, discovering that every thing was carried on in a very artful and most arbitrary manner, drew up a remonstrance on the subject, and presented it to Mr. Haldane. Their language was decorous, but the offence was unpardonable—they were accused before the Church of rebellion against their Pastor. It was in vain, that they offered to justify by facts every thing that they had said—in vain, that they offered to prove, that the equality promised them by Mr. James Haldane, in his view of Social Worship, was never reduced to practice ; they were admonished to repent of their sin, or the brethren could no longer walk in

The Wits⁴¹ assail you too, with bitter sneers,
 A moment listen to these miscreants jeers.
 Come, Brother Robert, what's thy secret view,
 In ord'ring round this mad pedestrian crew
 To head a furious sect; no, not so bad,
 Thou art a holy but a prudent lad:
 A nobler plan exalts thy soaring mind,
 That leaves the worldly Wesleys far behind;
 Where converts grow, your satellites persuade
 A Church to build, you freely give them aid,
Mortgage

fellowship with them. What is this but an intolerance equal to that of the Antiburghers? But it will always be discovered, that those who profess equality in theory, are, in practice, its greatest enemies. This despotism in the churches will be resumed in a subsequent note.

⁴¹ Ridicule has been condemned in matters of religion on any pretence whatever; and it has been remarked, that the wildest opinions that ever were entertained in matters of religion are more rational than unconcern in these matters. But although this remark be strictly just, and it be farther granted, that no religious persons sincerely attached to opinions, however absurd, provided they do not interfere improperly with others, are legitimate objects of ridicule, yet hypocrites are unquestionably fair game, and such we conceive the Gentleman mentioned in the text to be. That they proceeded upon improper principles, were guilty of improper actions, disseminated doctrines which they did not sincerely believe, will be proved; and that they were ambitious of power, and building castles on the ruins of others, will be shewn in the sequel: and these certainly render them as fit objects for contempt and ridicule, as the Priests of Baal were to Elijah.

Mortgage the premises, the us'ry fix,⁴²
And in the mass their own subscriptions mix.

If

⁴² At page 77, of Mr. Haldane's remarks on Mr. Ewing's publication, he inserts the following Letter from his man of business to himself, regarding the money which he lent the Churches :

EDINBURGH, 19th Nov. 1808.

" MY DEAR SIR,

" IN answer to your favour of the 16th current (since receipt of which I have looked over the correspondence, and other papers relative to that business), I have to say, in point of fact :

" That with regard to the interest due to you, on the various sums lent to Trustees for Churches, there are but two or three instances where the interest has been regularly paid. Several have never paid any thing, and the others have paid partially ; it not being convenient for them, as I suppose, to have done otherwise. At Whitsunday, 1807, when almost the whole of these Churches had got into a settled and organized state, I sent to each of them a state of the debt owing to you, carrying forward the interest to that term. This was done, that those concerned might have in view the amount of the debts they severally owed, and that they might not allow the interest to run on unsettled. As it happens, this was not done at last Whitsunday, excepting in one case, (Musselburgh) where the loan was large, and a considerable sum of interest standing over unpaid. The application for the interest was made verbally by me to one of the trustees ; and although no payment followed, the application was not repeated.

" That in no case have you ever demanded up any of these loans. A few days ago, a letter was sent me by Mr. Hamilton of Armagh, proposing for the trustees to pay up the loan to the Church there, and wishing to know how the

If they repay, thou gainst a world of fame;
If not, the House falls in, a surer game;

Thy

mortgage was to be discharged. Mr. Hamilton stated the reason of the application to be, the expence and inconvenience of remitting interest to Scotland. I answered, by suggesting to Mr. Hamilton the propriety of consulting a Solicitor at Armagh, in what way the discharge might be made out at the least expence. Since that time (June last) I have heard no more on the subject.

“ That there has not been a place of worship sold, which belongs wholly or in part to you, excepting only that at Haddington, in this neighbourhood, the property of which belonged to you and another. The Church there is very small, not above twenty-four members, far as I know. Owing to this, and the audience never being so large as to fill the Chapel, the Pastor and some of the members were accustomed to speak of the house as not being suitable. Last spring an application had, it seems, been made by a Presbyterian Congregation, to Mr. Hill, the Pastor of the Church, to purchase the Chapel—he wrote one of the proprietors, informing him of the offer, when it was understood, from the way in which they had formerly spoken of the house, and Mr. Hill forwarding that application, that the Church had not the smallest objection to the Chapel being sold. It was sold accordingly by the proprietors, who were careful not to give possession to the purchasers, till the Church were accommodated with another place. This is the literal history of the sale, and of the circumstances that led to it. I have only to add, that no change whatever in your conduct, towards those Churches to whom you had lent money, has ever taken place, so far as I know; and I presume that you have done nothing in these matters, with which I am not acquainted.

“ I am,” &c.

From this letter it is evident, that Mr. Haldane encouraged

Thy cautious wisdom still may fame obtain,
 Besides the aids become your worship's gain.
 Come, Brother Haldane, stare not with surprise,
 The serpent crawls in rather thin disguise;
 Ambition grows as wider grows the field,
 Your power extends when Congregations build,
 Apprentic'd teachers, such you send to serve,
 Who from the rule you fix will never swerve,
 And all the flocks that in connexion stand,
 Submit unknown to thy dread command.
 Thus, mighty Sir! success attends your choice,
 But spurn not those who love a humbler vice;
 One fancies cloaths, another fancies wine,
 A third a pack of hounds or concubine:
 You aim at praise, the honours of a Saint,
 A mighty boon, for which ten thousands faint.
 To such be kind, nor hazard to condemn,

Altho

small Congregations to build Churches. That he secured the money lent them by mortgages—that he expected the interest to be regularly paid up. It may also be remarked, that the poverty of these Congregations would have prevented them from building, had not pecuniary assistance been held forth: it was produced as a bait, and being a golden bait, it could not be resisted. As the people seldom paid either interest or principal, Mr. Haldane acquired an influence among them of the most improper kind, because derived from the most corrupt source—that of money. It was easy for him to turn them as he pleased, and we shall afterwards find him exercising his Pontifical Power. He had plenty of young Preachers ready to send to such places, and over them he might with prudence have long exercised power, had not Ewing, but not from honourable motives, sounded the alarm-bell.

Altho' with your's their plans are not the same ;
 Remember Saints can find an easy way,
 'To cheer the Brethren falling in decay.
 If caught in sin, you bid them stare and sigh,
 And to some better interest turn their eye ;
 For Saints, expert in Satan's crooked gins,
 Forgive with joy each others heinous sins.
 At Dairsie⁴³ once, a Schoolmaster by trade,
A straight

⁴³ This is a true story, but it is hardly fair to class poor M——ch with such company. The Saints are always very ready to blame the Devil for all their faults. I was better pleased with the expedient a man in my neighbourhood adopted, who was very subject to fits of anger, and during their continuance swore prodigiously. This man being admonished, on account of the dreadful curses and imprecations which he uttered, told his exhorter, that it was the person who put him in a rage, and not himself, that was to blame, and at his door shall the curses lie. It is notorious, that all the sectaries are more strict about forms than genuine holiness. Mr. Rowland Hill, in his answer to Dr. Jamieson, declares, on the authority of a friend of his, that swearing or getting drunk among the Antiburghers were deemed offences much less censurable, than hearing a Gospel Sermon from a Minister of any other denomination, and were passed over with a more gentle rebuke. But intolerance and odious separation are not confined to Antiburghers. The Haldanites have imitated this starched sect in this amiable particular, and become, as their quondam friend Mr. R. Hill would say, a trading company, monopolizing grace, and declaring all Churches except their own polluted. Brother Ballantine, the dear friend of the Haldanites, and their precursor in all their changes, writes in his Journal, April 1798—" Arrived at Huntly before six—received as a bro-

HYPOCRISY DETECTED.

A straight hair'd churlish canting liquorish blade,
Whom all the parish thought an avis rare,
So mighty was the Dominic in pray'r.
Once on a time was tempted, play'd the fool,
And fac'd M'C——h on the cutty stool;
O wicked sinner, cries the rude Mess John,
Repent, repent, thy grievous crime bemoan,
O what

ther in Christ by Mr. Cowie—was urged to preach this night by the brethren—religion seems flourishing here—the hearts of the godly, and there are many here, seemed to be lifted up in prayer and praise.” Again, “this was a refreshing season from the presence of the Lord. After sermon, attempted to encourage them in their abundant labours, in spreading the knowledge of the truth against every species of opposition. They are all of one heart, and of one mind, in diffusing the favour of the Redeemer’s name.” When Mr. Ballantine said all these fine things of Mr. Cowie and his people, he was an itinerant, under the orders of the notable Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home, who were forming no sect, but wished that Christians of all denominations should join in seeking to promote pure and undefiled religion; but this same Mr. Ballantine, who had been active in forming a sect, the rules and intentions of the Honourable Society notwithstanding, and had actually collected a Congregation at Elgin, answered a request from his old Brother in Christ, Mr. Cowie of Huntly, to assist him at his Communion, 14th Nov. 1802, in the following manner: “I cannot come, for I do not believe that your Church is pure; and I am determined no longer to support the unscriptural manner in which we have all gone on, in celebrating that ordinance.” Now, it does not appear, that Mr. Cowie or his people were worse in 1802 than in 1798; but Brother Ballantine’s eyes had been opened. We shall meet with him again.

O what a fall ! a pillar once you were,
A shining Hercules in grace and prayer.
Alas ! the Dominic in anguish cries,
The people startle at his fearful sighs,
In ashes I deplore my deadly sin,
Weak, weak is man unsanctified within.
For thirty minutes Satan sought for pow'r,
His boon he got, disgrace on me to show'r !
O ! was it Satan, said the melting Priest,
His mighty power the Patriarchs confest ;
The kirk forgives you, but in future try
With brisker force to spurn this enemy.
'Tis thus, these sneerers cry, that Saints demure,
For little flaws contrive a sov'reign cure ;
Such are the jeers and lies which round you float,
Alas ! these worldly sinners know you not.
Once fleeting things weigh'd greatly in your heart,
Till better prospects Gospel truths impart :
Long was the fight 'twixt piety and pride,
'Twixt grace and prudence, which should be your
guide.
Shall I my splendid patrimony sell ?
A father's feelings such a thought repel,
My daughter's claims I never can resist ;
But grace replies, beware of selfish mist.
'Twas thus you reason'd, till a blaze of light
Drove grov'ling, selfish prospects out of sight ;
Airthrey was sold, the Glasgow Circus bought,
Old Nick surpris'd, another mansion sought :
Enrag'd to see this dark prolific den,
Chang'd from a trap that caught the souls of men,
To one that rais'd them far above the sky,

His

His pow'r oppos'd, his servants made to fly.
James often groan'd to see the stubborn force,
That always mark'd your pious wishing course,
Each proper change this fervent Saint propos'd,
Thy strong but stiff-neck'd reason straight oppos'd:
Till on thy soul, sweet James, with prayers sincere,
A deep conviction wrought through grace and fear.
An error once corrected, you were found
To walk with firmness on the holy ground,
When James declar'd Itinerants must end,
And steady Pastors to the flocks attend.⁴⁴

F

This

⁴⁴ The Itinerants, who were supposed to be of so much utility at first, gradually disappeared as Congregations were formed; a circumstance in itself sufficient to prove the falsehood of the doctrine, that they intended to form no new sect: indeed, the melancholy proof remains—many Churches are built, whose supporters assume the name of Independents, a sect hardly known previous to this in Scotland. Ordinations, as they call them, or appointing men to officiate as Clergymen, commenced soon after the Society began its operations; and while the above falsehood was still warm in the mouth of its members, and still allowed a place among the reports, Mr. James Haldane was ordained, February 3, 1799. After this, the Missionary Magazine announces the building of Chapels, and appointing of Pastors, almost every month. The most extraordinary part of these ordinations is, the questions put to the person to be ordained, and his answers. In these, he commonly enumerates his conversion, (for they have all been sad reprobates it would appear) his experiences—his hopes—his certainty that he has had a call to preach the Gospel. We shall relate Mr. James Haldane's ordination in a future note, as a specimen of this solemn quackery; and we shall see how far he has acted up to his professions.

This plan you say, another sect will make;
That is, said Brother James, no brazen snake:
Our Preachers thousands find who never knew,
In all their lives a single Gospel view.⁴⁵
Souls now enliven'd by conversion's fire,
Thirsting for holy drink with brisk desire.

ROBERT.

This odious plan will numerous broils excite,
And those divide we promis'd to unite.

JAMES.

Of perfect unity to talk is wrong,
New lights illumine us as we jog along;
The humble sinner holding on his way,
Is taught to laugh at things of yesterday.⁴⁶

Are

⁴⁵ Mr. McAllum discovered twelve Parishes in the Highlands destitute of the Gospel, yet there was a Clergyman in each who preached every Sunday; but they talked in their sermons only of morals. This fellow, who is so learned in the Gospel, cannot write English: it is notorious, that the Letters and Journals of the Travellers are manufactured over again at Edinburgh. I know that the Gentlemen, to whom my letter is more particularly addressed, will cry out, that they were only Members of the Society for propagating the Gospel: I answer one of them—true, Robert, but nothing was done except through or by you.

⁴⁶ YESTERDAY.—These people, incapable of reasoning, and not content with the simplicity of the Gospel, and those essential parts which are so easily understood, are forever discovering novelties, and not so anxious to act with propriety as to appear skilful in the Scriptures; they twist the meaning of passages, and uniformly raise positive institutions to an equality with the most essential duties. By this

Are we to guard the rags that blind the soul?
 Let Scripture freedom reign without controul.⁴⁷

ROBERT.

The cozn'd sects will tax us with deceit.

F 2

And

means, their moral feelings become blunted—they cease to have clear notions of piety and virtue—things of little moment become great in their estimation, and becoming more and more conceited as they proceed, they look down, like the Pharisee upon the Publican, with sovereign contempt on all who are not members of the same denomination. These remarks are peculiarly applicable to the Congregationalists who pretend to a remarkable purity both in doctrine and practice, and consider all other Churches as fallen from the first faith, and groaning under Antichristian Tyranny.

⁴⁷ These Saints quote Scripture at random: they never attend to the context and the intention of the writer. But as every verse contains a proposition, they keep to this, and give it a meaning. In a few days their opinions are changed, and they give to the same verse a different interpretation—but still without any reference to what goes before, or follows after, because to fix the sense immutably would be to abridge their Christian liberty. Some of them discover, in the New Testament, a complete system of Church Government, but they cannot agree among themselves what that Government is. They all protest, that it is fully revealed; but one party found it to be one Bishop in a Church, another many, and some none at all. The Messrs. Holdanes can find no authority for separating the Ministry from the people, but contend, that every Christian man, if so inclined, may preach, pray, and administer the Sacraments. It requires very little sagacity to discover, that this would not only very quickly lead to confusion, but to the destruction of Religion itself. "If any man may assume authority

And straight denounce our plans a selfish cheat;
 Their pulpits open'd quickly at our will,
 When trav'ling Preachers shewed their Gospel skill:
 And shall we pinch them of their daily bread,
 By building Churches where the folks are fed.

JAMES.

To us, dear Brother, conscience is the law,⁴⁸
 Which

(saith Burnett) to preach and perform holy functions, it is certain that religion must fall into disorder, and under contempt. Hot headed men, of warm fancies and voluble tongues, with very little knowledge and discretion, would be apt to thrust themselves on to the teaching and governing others, if they themselves were under no government. This would soon make the public service of God to be loathed, and dissolve the whole body." "If Ministers be self-ordained (saith Hey) modest merit will never be called forth; presumptuous vanity will be ever ready to obtrude itself: noisy ignorance will overpower diffident wisdom, and what will hinder vicious men from rising into power, especially if any considerable emoluments were annexed to the Ministry? Nay, what can hinder doctrines opposite to each other from being taught, to the utter extirpation of all religious principle? What can hinder different men from officiating in such different ways as to produce disturbance and confusion, and to put to flight all religious affection?"

⁴⁸ CONSCIENCE.—As that secret testimony of the soul, which approves what it conceives good, and disapproves evil, must be well informed before it can be safely trusted. Conscience has frequently praised the most guilty conduct. St. Paul approved the death of Stephen. Many Christians have made it an affair of conscience to persecute and destroy their brethren. He that is ignorant of the will of God can never possess a conscience void of offence.

Which bids us fly to root out ev'ry flaw,
 Our errors blossom'd when we first began,
 To err, dear Sir, belongs to sinful man ;
 To find and cure them Gospel knowledge proves,
 'The Lord directs the children whom he loves.

ROBERT.

New sects and new divisions thus we breed,
 With feelings diff'rent from true Gospel seed.⁴⁹

JAMES.

No sects we raise, we are the shining light,
 Observ'd afar amidst the gloomy night ;⁵⁰
 The Scottish sect'ries little Gospel know,
 While we the road to dying Jesus shew :
 Tho' changing daily as the seasons roll,
 The changes flow from grace which hates controul.⁵¹

F 3

The

⁴⁹ These people always pretend that they are under the influence of the Spirit, but what is the fruit—love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance ; yet they are filling the country with hatred, variance, emulation, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings—nor are these works of the flesh confined to the common people, but they are exhibited in all their deformity by the principals. The quarrels and contentions between Ewing and Haldane had long subsisted. The Congregation at Edinburgh was divided, they were ignorant of every thing but how to promote evil.

⁵⁰ One of the travelling Preachers signs himself the least of all Saints, although least, yet one. Such arrogance betrays that spiritual pride, which is the ruling passion of them all—a vice inconsistent with true religion.

⁵¹ Our Saviour reprehended the Pharisees for teaching

Thus Brother James your scruples soon removes,
 And brings you round to like what he approves;
 Now, Ewing hating this improving course,
 First checks your progress as his stalking horse,⁵²

But

the people how to reconcile breaches of the moral law with conscience. "But ye say, whosoever shall say to his father or his mother it is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me, and honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandments of God of none effect by your traditions. Ye hypocrites," &c. This trick of the Pharisees these new sectaries know well how to apply, in a manner that suits their own affairs. In all their turnings and twistings they plead conscience, new light derived from the Gospel; or if these fail, irresistible grace. Every one is a Patriarch, an Apostle, a Saint filled with the Holy Spirit, and all the rest of mankind are corrupt, hardened, perverse, the children of Satan.

⁵² STALKING HORSE.—Ewing, as Mr. Haldane declares in his letters, was at first the most vehement of them all against the Establishment—he called the Kirk Babylon, the spawn of Antichrist—declared that no Christian could live in connexion with her, and that the Clergy were Infidels and Hypocrites: not one a true disciple. He was then a new convert, and he thought it requisite to shew his zeal by his hostility to those he had left. Now, that this Gentleman was acting the Hypocrite in all this, must appear morally certain, to every person acquainted with human nature. First, I can suppose, but only with difficulty, that a Minister of the Church of Scotland repents of signing the Confession of Faith, and thinks the form of ecclesiastical government objectionable. The reason why I find difficulty in this case is, that no man is forced to be a preacher, nor is any one so young as to be ignorant of the conditions

But restive grown, no longer can he mount
Upon your shoulders to the sacred fount.

Alas!

with which he must comply. All these things ought to be well examined, and are well examined, by every sincere candidate for holy orders; and if any scruples arise in his breast, he does not proceed. Now, Mr. Ewing was not a very young man, nor did he find any fault with the Kirk till within a short time of his defection. The difficulties which he had with his Colleague, the Session, &c. perhaps gave him new light. But without insisting on these, we shall suppose a good man (however difficult the supposition) discovers, as he supposes, errors in the Kirk, he resigns his charge conscientiously, and joins himself to some other denomination, or becomes the head of a new one. What will be his conduct to those he has left? If he be sincere, he will speak of them respectfully—he knows from experience, that men of the best intentions may still be in her bosom, for he remembers the time when he had no doubts of her purity. He will never speak against her, never preach against her, never hold her up to public scorn, or calumniate her with vile names. But, if he be a hypocrite, and his change is produced by interest, not conviction, or any other corrupt motive, he will be active in slandering the Society he has left, he will never tire of reviling them, and of holding them up to public execration. Now, to apply this to Mr. Ewing:—On the 29th Nov. 1798, this Gentleman preached his last Sermon in the Established Church—the *Missionary Magazine* for December announced, that the Circus at Glasgow had been lately purchased in order to be fitted up for a place of public worship; so that before he left his situation in Lady Glenorchy's Chapel, he took care to have Mr. Haldane fixed by a bond to give him a salary of £200 per annum: that is £50 sterling more than he had in the Establishment. By undertaking to teach young men to be prea-

Alas! that Popes and Bishops, filled with zeal,
To fight the Devil for the public weal,
Should foes discover where they fancied friends,

That

chers in fifteen months, he contrived to make about L.200 more, so that he bettered his circumstances by the change to the amount of L.250 per annum—this was a bait that lulled conscience asleep. Still the poor man might have sunk into contempt, with his perjury on his head, had he chosen to be quiet; but instead of being ashamed of his conduct, he comes forward with a paper on vows, published in the *Missionary Magazine*, for January 1804, in which he proves the folly of keeping any promise which we find to be inconvenient, and virtually recommends it to all Clergymen of the Kirk of Scotland, to trample on the vow which they made by signing the Confession of Faith. In this paper, the reasoning is indeed miserable, but the doctrine goes to destroy all confidence between man and man: we shall find it afterwards turned against himself. Hitherto Ewing had all the profit—Haldane all the loss. At first, the former had been more violent than the latter, and the first in proposing and adopting changes. But when Messrs. Haldanes began to doubt of the propriety of a regular Bishop or Minister to every Congregation, whom they ought to support, Ewing got alarmed, and called a halt. Touch not my salary, and I am prepared for any change—his conduct had evinced the truth of this: but if all may preach and pray, why pay a man for preaching and praying? This innovation filled Bishop Ewing with horror. He had not foreseen all the changes of his Brethren, and now they went to deprive him of his living. But accustomed to brazen things out, he did not hesitate to contradict many of his former opinions, and to oppose his Master. What will not a man do to preserve his living? Poor Haldane was made his stalking horse, his block to preferment.

That Judas, Ewing, all your prospects rends.
 This cunning Priest you thought an humble man,
 Who, for the Gospel prize, with ardour ran;
 So mild, so good, so fill'd with heavenly light,
 That all his earthly dross had taken flight.
 What think you of the sordid fellow now?
 A Saint you sought, and caught a filthy sow.
 O rebel Knave,⁵⁵ to poison all the joy
 Of him who brought you into rich employ;
 To mar the pleasures he began to taste,
 When Mother Kirk her sorrowing pains confess:
 When holy ploughmen, fill'd with Gospel truth,
 Roar'd anguish, fire and brimstone, North and South;
 Scarce did his bosom greet the golden hope,
 That our increasing sect would chuse him Pope,
 When you, the spawn of pride, began to groan,
 And like your master sought a miter'd throne.

As

⁵⁵ "Bishop Ewing informs us, that it was once pretended that, in an old English translation of the Bible, St. Paul, instead of a servant, was called a Knave of Jesus Christ. The word knave originally signified a boy, a servant: and it has long since become so extremely humble, that if any English translation were now to use it instead of Minister of the Gospel, the term would not surely be objected to as likely to occasion excessive veneration. Yet, if such a term could gain currency, it would soon lose its low association, and acquire, in spite of all the efforts of controversy, a degree of respectability suited to its new situation." Should any person wish to apply the word Knave to this learned Bishop, there will be no necessity for using it in the antient acceptance, for the modern will do better.

As Bishop,⁵⁴ you disdain a Layman's sway,
And tho' well fee'd⁵⁵ you dare to disobey.

Two Popes at once can never, Sir, agree,
From

⁵⁴ Mr. Ewing proves, as he thinks himself, that there was one Bishop in each of the primitive Churches, and only one. He is the only Clergyman in the Congregation of Independents at Glasgow: *ergo*, he is a Bishop. Did this Gentleman recollect, "let a Bishop be *blameless*," when he broke his oath. "Let a Bishop be no brawler," when he quarrelled with his friends and benefactors; not greedy of filthy lucre, when he changed his conscience for L.50 per annum.—1 Tim. iii. 2.

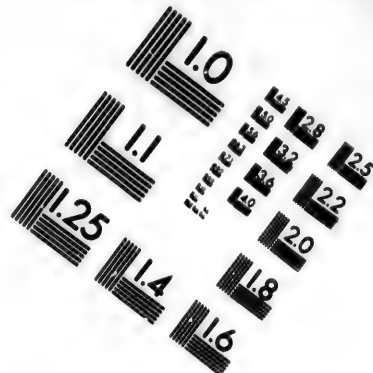
⁵⁵ As Mr. Ewing could not be ignorant of Mr. Haldane's wish to become the Pope of the sect, it was not very honourable in him to oppose this design, particularly as he had accepted of so much money for his acquiescence. It is true, he will put us in mind of his doctrine on promises, which will be found convenient on all occasions, but opposition came too late after taking the bribe; and if he pretend that he repented, the first step of this would have been to restore the money which he had received: to make restitution is the only solid indication of repentance. It is certain, that all Mr. Haldane's ambitious views were ruined by Ewing's early opposition, which had long thwarted him before it became public:—they were irreconcilable before the Haldanes turned Anabaptists. Ewing wanted to share the power, but to this the Holy Brothers would not consent—irritations commenced and increased—and finding it impossible to gain their purpose, they began to think of regaining their money. All other opposition could have been easily crushed; but Ewing had more learning, though he has precious little, and more ill nature than they, and a great itch for publishing.

From this your precious hopes began to flee ;
 And novel calumnies with greater power,
 On your devoted head began to shower.
 The heathen laugh'd to see the holy brawl,
 And you, with Ewing, equally they maul.
 " As we foretold, these hypocrites dissect⁵⁶

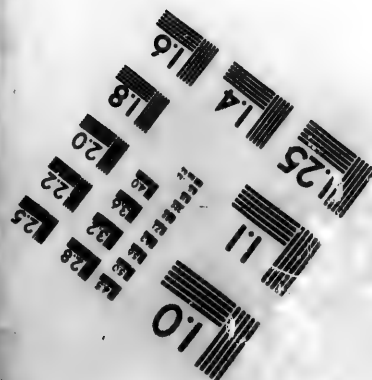
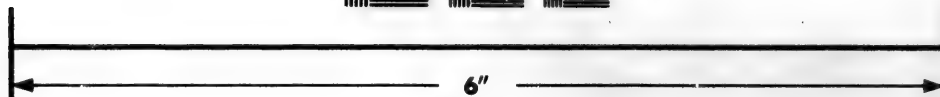
" Each

⁵⁶ After quarrelling for many years in private, Bishop Ewing and Pope Haldane wrote books against one another, from which the good people of Scotland may see what kind of men they are, who have been for many years reviling the established Church, and drawing them away from their Parish Kirks, and pretending to teach them a purer doctrine. These Gentlemen may be supposed to know their respective merits, and we shall learn from the characters they give of one another, what claims they have to be Saints. Mr. Haldane, in his letters to Mr. Ewing, published 1809, by Ritchie, Edinburgh, confesses that differences subsist between Mr. Ewing and him, and that there is much evil between them besides difference of opinion. These Saints pass each other in the street without speaking. Mr. H. insinuates that Mr. Ewing left the Church from a corrupt principle—accuses him of a lust for power—that he is not on speaking terms with two reputed Christians—of tyrannizing over his assistant—of telling lies, cool, deliberate lies—of walking disorderly. " You was for several years (says Mr. Haldane to Mr. Ewing, page 41) a Minister of the Church of Scotland, and afterwards came out of it, declaring it to be Babylon. You engaged in a Mission to India, and before it was prevented from another quarter, you abandoned the design. You came to me with Mr. Grove, on a deputation from the Ministers of the Established Church, to persuade me not to build a Tabernacle in Edinburgh, and a little after you was a chief promoter of the plan. You drew out a set of rules for the Church, and now you derive unspeak-





Resolution test chart showing patterns of vertical and horizontal lines with numerical values ranging from 1.0 to 2.5.



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"Each others characters with small respect;

"Lo! Haldane finding churches growing nice,

"His

able benefit from the rejection of human standards. You censured and ridiculed clerical dignity, now the Bishop cannot be sufficiently exalted. You were an enemy to Ecclesiastical titles, now you desire them," &c. Mr. Haldane also accuses him of gross tergiversation, and in page 69 gives him the lie, reproaches him for his bad temper, and calls him a calumniator. Much more may be found in Mr. Haldane's two pamphlets against Mr. Ewing; and, indeed, I cannot conceive a worse character than the Pope draws of the Bishop, his quondam friend. Mr. Ewing wrote an answer, in which he draws Mr. Haldane's character. I regret that I have not a copy of it, that the Pope might have justice; but from the pamphlets already quoted, I gather the following particulars, of which Mr. Haldane is accused:

Mr. Ewing says, that Mr. Haldane's conduct towards him is palpably immoral—that he is distressing the Churches for money—that he confesses himself that he had spoken evil of him (*viz.* Ewing)—that he is fickle and a lover of change—that he is covetous—a deceiver—doubts his politics—of a bad temper—accuses him of inhumanity, for hearing that the walls of the Circus of Glasgow were weak, Mr. Haldane stood at the gable ends, while speaking of the necessary alterations, for fear it might fall, but encouraged Mr. Ewing and his Congregation to enter. If they had been crushed it was a Providence, and what would Mr. Haldane care—but he would run no risk himself: so much for the humanity of the Pope. Mr. Ewing impugns his sincerity and integrity—accuses him of oppressing the Preachers—that he had too much influence in the Church—that his heart is deceitful and desperately wicked. Such are the characters which these two Saints give of one another: justly may we apply to these men the words of the Apostle—"they pro-

“ His cash demands to purchase glory twice,
 “ The building jobs give only withering praise,
 “ For Ewing's tale the base intent betrays.”

See Haldane fierce to get the Circus⁵⁷ back,

Since

less that they know God, but in works they deny him, being abominable and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.”—Tit. i. 16.

⁵⁷ Mr. Haldane's design, in giving so much money to the different Congregations to be laid out in building Churches, (on which this money was secured) was evidently to beget an influence, and in most cases a controlling power. As soon as he found that this could not be obtained, he drew back. He had tempted Mr. Ewing to leave the Church of Scotland, by giving him the Circus of Glasgow, with a good salary annexed, as long as he lived. A legal bond was given to Mr. Ewing, before he considered himself safe. The condition on his part was to preach the Gospel. After the quarrel, Mr. Haldane demands the Circus back—Mr. Ewing pleads the promise, and the legal bond: Mr. Haldane discovers great iniquity in this bond—affects to lament his error—abhors all reference to law—pretends that Mr. Ewing cannot keep the house in justice, though he may have a legal claim, and quotes his own doctrine on vows, which goes to destroy all moral obligation, and to undermine faith and truth, the pillars of society. Ewing declares, that he is daily fulfilling the conditions of the bond; but to this Haldane demurs, as the various changes which he had adopted were not followed by Mr. Ewing. In the dispute about the house, the miserable hypocrisy of Haldane is evinced throughout, and Ewing for once is in the right. Mr. Haldane in point of religion, honour, and justice, had no more to do with the Circus of Glasgow, till Mr. Ewing's death, than he had with the Parish Churches. The woeful cant which he writes on the subject can deceive nobody.

Since now the Pastor follows not his track ;
 But then the band this holy convert chose,
 Before on Mother Kirk he turn'd his nose,
 Stands in the way, and Ewing wont restore
 The sacred temple, while his lungs can roar.
 They cant, deceive, and cozen, but in vain,
 With knowing Saints this canting brings no gain;
 Both skill'd alike to cozen and deceive,
 They shine, profess, but neither will believe.
 This Church for Gospel purposes you gave,
 I daily preach, and daily thousands save :
 The classes all advance with quick'ning pace,
 And soon will spread the work with special grace.
 These words to Haldane no sweet comfort give,
 Who now perceives the Churches on him live. ⁵⁸
 Stop Haldane, stop, with sober reason's eye,
 Behold the good your various toils supply ;
 You first perceive the Churches all in debt,
 Themembers jarring, and with ills beset ;
 Your ready aid encourag'd them to build,
 On you they reckon'd as their firmest shield.
 But now the debt you force them to repay,
 With mighty costs and interest sans delay,
 Their faithful friend becomes their bitt' rest foe,
 Ensnares them first, and leaves them reaping woe. ⁵⁹

In

⁵⁸ The Ex-Pope soon discovered, that in the present situation of things, he had twenty-one thousand pounds lying dead, and the Churches enjoying it, they reaped the benefit and he the loss ; as long as he retained power, he was not unwilling to let matters pass on, but the moment that his power was gone, he demanded his money.

⁵⁹ It is evident, that the people in many places would

In this your glorious plan for crushing sin,
 Your cloak of faith, sweet Sir, I fear is thin;
 In every Parish ranc'rous jars are bred,
 No more the Clergy are the sinner's dread:
 No more their gen'rous hearts and tongues persuade
 The friendless poor, and comforts round them spread:
 Dissensions rise, the firmest friends divide,
 The Kirk they hate, and all its forms deride,
 The Parson pity, faithless and profane,
 Doom'd with the unconverted to remain.⁶⁰
 In faith unsettled, thoughtless people run
 To hear your Preachers sent with ev'ry sun;
 Keen Fortune-hunters,⁶¹ practis'd in grimace,

To

never have thought of building, had they not been induced to do so by the prompt assistance offered by Mr. Haldane, whose views they did not then perceive. They now find themselves saddled with a grievous debt, which they are unable to pay, and at the mercy of a Saint!

⁶⁰ What are the faults of the regular clergy? They do not rave as those fanatical hypocrites do, and therefore displease them. Indeed, the established Clergy, whatever doctrine they preach, are obnoxious to all rising sects, for it is by railing against them that those learned Preachers of fifteen months preparation gain hearers. They place themselves on an equality with the first reformers—James Haldane stands for Luther—Bishop Ewing for Calvin, and the Presbyterian Church is as corrupt as that of Rome formerly was. The poor people believe all this; and learn to despise men of rational piety and competent learning, and to prefer before them persons grossly ignorant of the very religion which they pretend to preach.

⁶¹ Mr. WALKER, late Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin,

To private profit turn each lucky case,
 The mob converted, spurn their humble state;
 Neglect their callings, evil habits get;
 Tho' children starve at home, these Saints declare
 No worldly bus'ness shall their souls ensnare.
 Domestic harmony forever flies;
 To you, the Sire—to Kirk the Mother hies,
 The Son a Heathen turns, the daughter's smiles
 Expose her quickly to some Preacher's wiles.

These cutting words your humble soul could bear,
 For what can hurt the pious and sincere?
 But nearer pain disturbs your sorrowing breast,
 Your prospects clouds and poisons all your rest.
 The base ingratitude the Churches shew
 To you, their Father, sinks your thoughts in woe;
 For

asserts in a Pamphlet, that though young men sent from Scotland to Ireland by the Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home, under pretence of preaching the Gospel, were in reality seeking their fortunes. This truth was illustrated by their conduct in Scotland. Cleghorn and Ballantine go out as itinerants from Congregations at Wick and Thurso, get Houses built, and become the Pastors. Ballantine having soon after some differences with his people, went to Elgin. Here he quarrelled with his people, because they did not appear inclined to adopt his eternal innovations, and because he insulted them and neighbouring congregations, calling them corrupt. The other Preachers get Congregations, and, like worldly men, leave a poor one for a rich: Mr. Campbell goes from Dunkeld to Dundee. It was a great thing for a Ploughman, a worn-out Sailor, a Merry Andrew, Stage Doctor, &c. to become a Preacher—the trade, as such people managed it, was easier and more profitable.

For Brother James you call, with eager speed,
 To give you counsel in this time of need ;
 Your rueful case the groaning sailor hears,
 And ponders sagely on your cares and fears.
 O Brother, Robert, all your Airthrey cash
 Will fly like chaff, or any gambler's trash ;
 Its rapid flight must shorten social cheer,
 A dismal issue, which I sadly fear.
 How shall we plot, the money to resume,
 Alas ! this scheme could only end in fume ;
 From Orme's⁶² fierce character you well may judge,
 That for you Church or Pastor hate to budge :
 But kick with fatness at the very man,
 Who first contriv'd their riches getting plan.
 'Turn Anabaptist,⁶³ what, Sir, are you mad ?

G

The

⁶² Mr. Orme, after being a short time at Edinburgh, in the classes, went to Perth to preach. It appears the Church there elected three Preachers, of whom Mr. Orme was one. These did not agree, as might have been foreseen. Mr. Haldane finding this out by a private letter from Mr. Orme, summons all the three, by virtue of his Apostolic authority, to Edinburgh ; reproves them, and sends them back : quarrels still continued—Mr. Haldane turned Anabaptist. Of the Congregation at Perth, almost the whole rejected the novelty ; nevertheless Mr. Haldane turned them out of the Church, of which he was the Chief Creditor, and gives it to the few who turned as he turned. He did the same with the Church at Dundee, and consequently did certainly oppress the Churches, and reaped a benefit from subscriptions. The facts are unquestionable, on the face of his own pamphlets against Bishop Ewing.

⁶³ We have abstained from saying much of Mr. James Haldane, that we might give a more distinct account of him in

The truth impugn, in faith I'm not so bad.

JAMES.

Stop Robert, stop, your rising fury check,
My reasons hear, confirm them or reject.

Your

this place. He seems to be the religious projector, he proposes changes—Robert opposes, but at length yields. On Sabbath, 3d February, 1799, (says the *Missionary Magazine*) Mr. James Haldane was ordained, in the Circus of this city, to be Pastor of a Church recently formed here. Mr. Garie went into the pulpit, and, after prayer, solemnly asked Mr. Haldane the following questions :

1st. As an unconverted Ministry is allowed to be a great evil, will you, Sir, be pleased to favour us with some account of the dealings of God with your soul ?

2d. Will you inform us, what are the circumstances and motives which have led you to preach the Gospel, and to desire to engage in the work of the Ministry ?

3. Will you favour us with your views of the leading truths of the Gospel ?

4. Will you explain your views and purposes, respecting the duties and trials that are before you in the Pastoral Office ?

To these questions, Mr. Haldane replied at considerable length, and in a manner that seemed to make a very deep and general impression. His account of the dealings of God with him, contained an historical sketch of his whole life, in which there appears to have been many remarkable displays of Providential mercy, as well as the most satisfying evidence of a saving change. His account of the circumstances and motives, which concurred in leading him to preach the Gospel, were such as, in the unanimous opinion of the Church, and of many others, established a very clear call to the work of the Ministry. The declaration of his

Your cash to Churches lent you can't demand,
While in connexion with the flocks you staid;

G 2

See

faith was scriptural, explicit, and uncommonly striking. His views and purposes, as to the work before him, shewed a strong sense of insufficiency, and a becoming dependence on promised Divine aid. Mr. Haldane here expressed his intention of endeavouring to procure a regular rotation of Ministers to assist him in supplying the Tabernacle. He declared his willingness to open his pulpit, for the occasional labours of every faithful Preacher of the Gospel, of whatever denomination or country he might be. He signified his approbation of the plan of the Church which had chosen him for their Pastor, as being simple and scriptural; but disavowed any confidence in it as a perfect model of a Church of Christ, to the exclusion of all others, &c.

Here, Mr. Haldane declares his saving faith and his saving opinion of himself—he knew the time of his conversion, the strange feelings with which it was accompanied—the perceptible dealings of God with his soul. But this implies a new revelation—now we suppose that man a Christian, who is able to discern, to believe, and receive the Revelation already made in the word of God. This Gentleman receives a Divine Revelation himself, he feels that his sins are pardoned, that his person is accepted, and he builds his persuasion of the truth of this, not upon any thing declared in Scripture, but upon the vividness of a sudden feeling. If Mr. Haldane speak true, then he is not a Christian, and his religion is not that of the New Testament; for Scripture, so far from promising a new Revelation, expresses the contrary, that there will be no more. These public confessions have been taken from the Methodists, who gain thousands of proselytes by such hypocritical practices, by relating sudden conversions and hasty illuminations. It now happens, that Mr. Haldane acknowledges virtually, that he was de-

See Ewing's bond in legal justice clear,
And conscience has no elbow room to steer :

But

ceived. He disapproves of the plan of the Church which he then approved. He no longer troubles himself about procuring a regular rotation of Ministers, he thinks regular Pastors useless, he has taken down the Pulpit as a rag of Anti-christ, and the Scavenger and Cady have as good a right to pray, preach, and exhort, as himself, and will, no doubt, acquit themselves as well. The reasons of his turning Anabaptist are mentioned in the text; but, as a specimen of his talents, we shall exhibit his sentiments on Baptism in 1805, taken from a book which he then published, called a View of Social Worship, and contrast them with his reasons for changing his sentiments and practice, published in 1809. As literary compositions, both these publications are much below mediocrity.

View of Social Worship, 1805.

Jews changed the outward sign of the covenant, and substituted Baptism for Circumcision, and the first for the seventh day of the week.—Page 325.

It appears then, that in virtue of the divine commandment to Abraham, every believer is bound to have his children baptised—this is our explicit warrant.—Page 328.

Acts vii. 12.—Some have expressed their surprise, that children are not also mentioned here; but men and women include the whole human race.—P. 327.

That children enjoy spiritual blessings, in virtue of their connection with godly parents, is evident from the whole Scripture.

Reasons for a Change of Sentiments respecting Baptism, 1809.

Baptism not substituted for Circumcision.—Page 91. The sanctification of the Lord's Day stands upon very different grounds from Infant Baptism.—P. 91.

The argument for Infant Baptism, from the Covenant with Abraham, proceeds on a mistaken view of that Covenant.

The ordinance of Baptism cannot be administered to Infants, for the subjects of Jesus are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

As to children of believers being interested, because they are such, in the salvation of Christ, there is no foundation in Scripture for such an idea.—Page 77.

But Anabaptist turn, then boldly cry,
Give back the Church, and Ewing must comply.
For fickle Conscience to the mob will shew,

That

Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven. Again, the Apostles say, believe, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house.—This is inexplicable in the Antipiedobaptist system.

The Gospel to be preached to all creatures. On the whole, it appears that Infant Baptism is an ordinance of God.—P. 332.

Practice of ancient Churches in its favour, that is, in favour of Infant Baptism.—334.

Pelagius accused of denying Infant Baptism, but denies the imputation.

Justin Martyr, who writes soon after the death of the Apostles, as here stated only 40 years, speaks of Baptism as being to Christians in the place of Circumcision.

Irenæus speaks of infants being regenerated to God, and he lived near the Apostles. So Clemens Alexandrinus Origen, speaks expressly and repeatedly of Infant Baptism. He declares, that the Church had from the Apostles an order to baptise infants: he was born little more than 80 years after the Apostles —Eusebius and Cyprian of the same side.—Page 334.

In 1809, four years after, he discovers in a house, household, or family, no children, not even that of the Jailor's.—Acts xvi. 29.

Only believers to be baptized. Infant Baptism is in opposition to the plain language of Scripture.—Page 57.

The evidence of antiquity much against Infant Baptism.—Contents.

Tertullian, who lived about the year 200, is the first who mentions Infant Baptism, and argues against it. Irenæus, who was his contemporary, and Justin, who lived before him, are forgotten: and Origen, who was quoted in Social Worship as living before Tertullian, but who lived some time after, is also forgotten. He finds few fathers to suit, and therefore sticks to Tertullian.

That sordid bonds the Saints should never know :
To mix with warm religious sweet perfume,

No

In 335, βαπτω and βαπτίζω do not always signify to dip or plunge, but also to wash; and Dr. Owen is quoted to confirm this, and some passages from Scripture.—Page 335.

He discovers now, that these two Greek words never signify any thing but to immerse or plunge. He forgets poor Dr. Owen.

These contradictory passages might have been multiplied : and the natural inference is, that this man is not qualified for a public teacher, might perhaps have misapprehended a text, but the evidence of history cannot differ from itself, and yet he discovers antiquity in favour of Infant Baptism, and again he finds it against it. But the two notable arguments which weighed in his mind are, as he tells us in his introduction, 1st, that he was staggered, because from time to time some Members of the Tabernacle went to the Baptists, but none of them came over to the Tabernacle. Is it wonderful that the mob, who ran after such a blind guide as this, should discover their folly; but having lost the way, that they should continue to wander till they fell among new thieves. This second convincing argument is still more notable. I was a good deal struck with the justice of a remark made by one of my children, a boy of five years of age, who saw me baptize a child—he enquired of me when I came home, how that child could believe, for the Bible said, that believers should be baptized. This able Theologian of five years convinced his Father; though some people might say, that if the question of the boy was any thing more than at random, it became an argument in favour of early Baptism. The true reason why Baptism was so long delayed in the early ages of Christianity arose from the belief, that the person to be baptised obtained remission of all his former sins. Sinners were, therefore, in the custom of delaying this ceremony as long as possible. If Mr. J. Hal-

No carnal int'rests ever should presume.⁶⁴
 As with your Patron you no longer act,
 You must in justice give the Circus back,
 Or else the Anabaptist scheme pursue,
 The choice we offer to your serious view.
 He dare not turn, he dreads his jealous flock,
 And such apostacy his friends would mock ;
 Or if he turn, of pop'lar favour bare,
 As Sampson of his strength, when shorn of hair,
 Our humble slave will twist him as we please,
 And cast the fellow off with wond'rous ease.

ROBERT.

'The classes, James, that dungeon of expence,
 'To banish them what honest fac'd pretence.

JAMES.

'That Brother leave to me, I'll clearly prove,
 Such classes hostile to our Master's love ;
 'Teach men⁶⁵ Divinity, how monstrous vile,
 The dire contrivance of the Prince of Guile.

Within

dane be a man of common sense, these arguments could have no weight upon his mind : the text therefore gives the only feasible account of his change—and after the cash is all recovered, we may expect him to recover his senses, and to return to the practice of Infant Baptism.

⁶⁴ At length, rather than be longer plagued, Ewing gave the Tabernacle up, and Haldane sold it very profitably to the Relief Congregation.

⁶⁵ See Note 22. Mr. Haldane borrows all he says against learning from Mr. Ballantine. See likewise the proof of the truth of the second charge of the Pastoral Letter.

Within themselves all things the Churches have,
 Their holy souls no customs should enslave :
 Let Elders rule, and all of good report
 Dispense the mysteries, preach and pray, exhort :
 No Bishops can they wish, where all should be
 As much a Clergyman as you or me.
 These sinful Classes are at present small,
 For many from the Churches have a call :
 The rest disperse, as openings can be found,
 To spread the Gospel through some Heathen ground ;
 And promise large, when gone we can forget,
 Few will return to tell their dismal fate.
 If letters plague, this answer soon will tire,
 The labourer's surely worthy of his hire ;
 Your wants, your hearers always must supply,
 On our small Funds no longer friend rely.
 This scheme we found in operation quick,
 It silenc'd modest Reid and clam'rous Dick ;⁶⁶

Our

⁶⁶ See the Missionary Magazine, for April 21, 1806.

Extract of a Letter from Upper Canada, dated Sept. 2, 1805.

" I received your Letter, dated the 8th March, 1804, in due time ; but various unforeseen circumstances have prevented me from writing you hitherto. A month or two ago, I got the perusal of Volumes 1st, 3d, and 4th, of the Missionary Magazine. I went eighty miles for them, and now having read them, my spirit is renewed in me. I have also read many other Evangelical Tracts, so that I am made to cry out, O poor miserable Canada, miserable in the greatest latitude of the word, however rich you may be in silver and gold, in wheat and in corn, for the want of the pure and unadulterated Gospel, for the want of evangelical preaching, for the want of regenerating grace, you are poor indeed.

Our secret purpose they no longer serve,
And let the silly Rascals work or starve.

ROBERT.

O happy Britain, happy indeed, under the influence of that spirit, which enlighteneth thee in these latter days, when other nations are in more than heathen darkness. O Lord, do thou shed more and more of thy blessed Spirit abroad throughout my native country; do thou fill the hearts of all the Highlanders, nay, all Britons, with thy quickening spirit. O send thy Spirit abroad also among the barren Canadians. Ah! dear Sir, was there ever heard of such a general awakening since the Apostles' days? The reformation of Luther, Calvin, or Knox, can hardly surpass it, hardly a village but enjoys the labours of some one or other of the blessed Missionaries, or their Catechists: surely the good effects of the missions of this age will be matter of praise to future generations. Ah! dear Sir, if we had in this barren wilderness, but only for a few weeks, any of these men whose labours have been blest with the influence and manifestations of the Spirit, I would rejoice exceedingly. Then, I hope, many of the strange and unaccountable opinions and prejudices, the formality, and infidelity, which universally reign in those parts, would be plucked up by the root. In short, Sir, we have but few people in this country besides Arminians and Papists. There are a few Methodist and Moravian Congregations up the country, but none within eighty or a hundred miles of this place. There is both place and employment enough for six settled Ministers and twelve itinerant Preachers, and as many Catechists, in these parts. Imagine to yourselves a district of forty thousand square miles or more, that twenty-five years ago was a perfect wilderness, and now is inhabited, few places here and there excepted, with a mixture of various people out of every nation in Europe and state in America, Protestants of various denominations, Lutherians and Calvinists, Papists and Jesuits,

ROBERT.

This plan, dear Brother, surely wears a face,
But Conscience trembles at its close embrace;

Some

Jews, Indians, Negroes, &c. &c. Every year new emigrants come to settle in Upper Canada, and there is perhaps a hundred born for every one that dies. There are hundreds of persons at the age of twenty who are not baptized, and I have seen married people come to our church for baptism. There are not twelve Ministers or Priests (*i. e.* Teachers) of any kind of religion, as far as I can learn, between the confluence of the rivers St. Lawrence and Otway and Lake Superior, and none at all between that and the Western Ocean, among the millions of Indians that inhabit the wilderness. You may reasonably ask, Why do not so many people send for Ministers? I tell you plainly, Sir, they do not feel in anywise to be in need of them. I know there are many persons who sincerely lament the want of the Gospel, but these of themselves cannot support Ministers, and some know not where to apply for them. You will be good enough to let the religious condition of this country be known to the Missionary Society, send them a copy of this letter, or extracts from it. I beg of them to have pity on their country people here, who feed on barrenness and poverty, while they are dividing the rich spoils at home, and send out labourers to the great harvest. Let them send, if it were but one Missionary, to the Counties of Glengary and Stormont, or let them send one on a tour through Upper Canada, to see and know the state of the inhabitants, Let him stay if it were but a twelvemonth, if they choose, and then return to report his discoveries. I am sure it is much better, and more to God's service, and the honour of the Society, to send a few Missionaries to Upper Canada, than to send them to unhealthy climates among savages, who, if they are not murdered, fall a sacri-

Some knotty doubts will still before me rise,
And bowel twichings take me by surprise.

JAMES.

O Brother, Brother, cant with whining fools,
Your bosom never yields to Conscience rules,
Your craving passions form the blazing pole,
Round which your actions move without control.
Our plan has fail'd, no power, no fame accrues,⁶⁷

Our

fice to the climate. It is absolutely necessary, that a person coming to these parts should be able both to converse and preach in the Gaelic language; if he understood French, and could preach in that tongue, he would not only find it much to his advantage, but might convert the ignorant French Canadians. Some persons who emigrated to this place, persons who know nothing of the power of godliness, were pleased to degrade and asperse the Missionaries to their countrymen here, so that the wisdom and power of God seemed foolishness to them. Some came over from Inverness-shire, and reported, that their country people had changed their religion. When asked what religion it was they embraced, 'God knows,' said they, 'some curious religion, that puts them mostly out of their wits: they are constantly praying. We could not stay long with them, and so we came to America.'

This letter, curious and extravagant as it is, would been infinitely more so had it been published as it was written; but it has undergone a strict revision and correction before it went to the press. The folly and ridiculous affectation of the original writer are well known: but he cannot write a sentence of grammar, or of tolerable sense—we are, therefore, obliged to the Editors for what portion of these may be found in the above letter.

⁶⁷ It was evident, before Mr. Haldane turned Anabaptist,

Our servants daily gain---we daily lose ;
 By turning to the Anabaptist side
 We break connexion, farther claims deride,
 The cash recover to the Churches lent,
 Their temples sell, or lease them at a rent.

ROBERT.

This offers well, but are you, James, sincere,
 How can you in this changing cause appear ;
 You lately 'gainst these Anabaptists wrote,
 Their errors wailing, have you this forgot ?

JAMES.

I'll write again, my errors all confess,
 Derive my healthy change from special grace ;
 Besides, my privileges as a Saint
 Give power to change, as proper gifts are lent ;
 The simple herd will view me with surprise,
 And from this change, a purer Saint I'll rise :⁶⁸
 The Anabaptists, vying in respect,
 Shall hail as friends, the pillars of their sect.
 Thus, Brother, cash at least we shall not lose—
 From former schemes, too simple in their views,

Which,

that he could not be Pope—ignorance and ingratitude go together: the Preachers were too ignorant to be grateful. Wesley kept his Preachers in order, not by gratitude, which he was never so foolish as to expect, but from power—if they opposed him, he turned them off. Had Haldane kept the same hold, he might have really been Pope.

⁶⁸ James was rather out in his calculation, the people began to see through him. Their folly had gone past, and they were turning back to common sense as he was turning Anabaptist. He is, therefore, no longer thought a Saint.

Which, grand and promising, could not withstand
That serpent Ewing's secret working'hand :
No prudent Saint, by long experience wise,
Shall thrust his finger in our future pies.⁶⁹

⁶⁹ Among the Political Problems resolved by the American Revolution, the great utility of religious establishments is one of the most important. I believe, there are very few persons who have witnessed the almost total extinction of Christianity in this rising republic, and the consequent degeneracy of the people, who will not approve of some general form of public worship. In theory, many objections of great weight may be raised against any mode that could be adopted ; but herein lies the fallacy—they point only to the mode and not to the thing itself. It is not our intention to enter deeply into the question of religious establishments, a full discussion of it would require a volume ; but having seen the baneful effects of the want of such an establishment, in a state containing seven millions of inhabitants, I cannot abstain from making a few cursory remarks. It has been said, that a Religious Establishment was neither consistent with the true interests of Religion, nor the peace of Society—that it was a most violent infringement of the right of private judgment—and always turned into a Political Engine to support the State. These are plausible objections, and abstractly considered, they seem to have some force ; but when examined by the test of experience, their strength vanishes away. There is no rational being, who has ever taken the trouble to reflect, who feels not the propriety of worshipping God in some way or other ; on this there can be no difference of opinion : but shall the State supply the means of religious instruction and a form of public worship, or leave it to every one to worship or not as he pleases ? Or, in other words, shall the State encourage what is allowed on all hands to be useful,

or stand an indifferent spectator? I must acknowledge, that to me this question affords no difficulty: if an oath be required, either for allegiance, or the due discharge of the duties of any office—if promises are to be believed and performed, then is Religion necessary, for without religion they have no basis. Had not Christianity been revealed, then every person would have been left to his own wicked imagination; but as the Supreme Being has set limits to our liberty by this revelation, which confines us to this religion and to it only, I cannot think it any infringement of the general liberty to imitate this example, by affording the means of acquiring a true knowledge of what has been revealed. It has been farther stated, that no Government, pretending to be free, has the power of establishing a public form of worship. This objection has been in a great measure anticipated; but it may be farther observed, that no form of Government is capable of promoting the general benefit, unless it have the power to restrain evil and to promote good. This may be done in two ways—by measures of force, which command obedience, or by encouragement and persuasion. As to measures of force, they consist of the laws of the land, which can only go a very little way; there must, therefore, be another law, which shall take cognizance of the internal man—a law not to be obtained in books, not to be engraven on tablets of brass, a law which always subsists, which is every moment observed, and which condemns every species of wrong. Now as this internal law is of infinitely more consequence than the general ordinances of any country, it surely behoves Government to lend it their countenance and protection, as far as they can. If they are able, by encouragement and persuasion, to give it force and energy, to prevent its corruption and ensure its proper direction, they are certainly acting favourably to the freedom and happiness of the people; for every thing that promotes virtue and religion, promotes happiness
and

and freedom. Now, it appears to me, that this may be materially effected by a liberal religious establishment. Ah! say many, this would be to assume authority over the minds of the people, and Government have business only with the actions. Yet, this authority must be assumed in almost all cases by Government, to render it useful; the objection, therefore, if it mean any thing, goes too far, it would preclude all interference in education, by which the mind is formed. Indeed, the very ideas of the people gradually take a bias from the public laws and institutions; so that, if we wish to deprive Government of all power, directly or indirectly, over the minds of the people, we must deprive them of the power of making regulations of any sort. Religious opinions ought indeed to be free, and so ought all our opinions; but a general system of education gives force to this freedom, because it enlightens the mind, and makes it capable of judging with accuracy. And what is a Religious Establishment, but a branch of public education? I am, therefore, of opinion, that it is the duty of every Government to form a Religious Establishment for the State, as soon as they can ascertain that a majority of the citizens are agreed upon some points of Religious Union. It is true, the minority will clamour, as minorities always do, and it must clamour the longer, and with the more success, as religious disputes are interesting and easily darkened. The points of union ought certainly to be most plain and simple, so that, if it were possible, all might be satisfied. But they can never be so composed as to obviate every difficulty. The simple question—Are you a Christian? would meet with opposition. Some would say, the word Christian is ambiguous; if a definition were attempted, it would only serve to multiply objections. It is vain, therefore, to look for a form of public worship, any more than a measure of policy, that will please all; but one may be easily found, that shall promote true morality and purity of life, which shall

keep piety warm without being enthusiastic, become the mother of good works, encouraging not excusing our duties, the guide and sweetener of life, the cordial of disease, the conqueror of death. But if the question of Religious Establishment has been hitherto doubtful, it can be so no longer. The Americans, by a general toleration without any establishment, will soon arrive at the lowest sink of human corruption—the greater part of the country is left without the administration of any Religion at all. Nor is this to be much wondered at, when we consider that, even in England, the higher ranks withdraw themselves from the public ordinances of religion, or attend them with indifference. So that, were there no provision made for the religious instruction of the people, there is no reason to suppose, that such provision would be supplied by the wealthy. Consequently, religion would gradually disappear; in some districts, those religiously inclined would be too few and too poor to support a Minister—and in others, quarrels and dissensions would produce the same effect. Such is exactly the case in America; in many places the public worship of God is unknown, no regard is paid to the first day of the week, and the people, with some crude knowledge, chiefly of a political nature, are fast approaching to the most general corruption of morals. In states possessing a Religious Establishment, the country is divided into small portions, and a religious Teacher placed in each, by which means all the people have access to religious instruction: but I never would allow the Establishment any other exclusive right than the support of its Clergy, all other denominations should be equally free, every body should have it in his power to adopt that form of worship which pleased him better. The Magistrate should only say, I do not force you to attend the Established Church—I have established for you the best form of Christianity that I know, but if you are not satisfied, and can do better, I shall be glad—I wish you to
be

religious, and any form of Christianity is better than infidelity. Even placing a man of virtue and education in each Parish is of very great use, in keeping up among the people a reverence for what is pure and holy; for independent of his instructions from the pulpit, he holds free intercourse with all classes of his parishioners—he is the friend and adviser of the poor as well as of the rich—he is the composer of differences, the promoter of peace and contentment, the catechiser of children, the encourager of industry, sobriety, and all the virtues that make man prosperous and happy. Had a regular Establishment no other advantage than this of placing a man, in every small circle, whose life is devoted to purposes so useful, it would be sufficient to prove its excellence. Where a regular Clergyman is settled, one good example will commonly be found, and all the advantages of the Sabbath fully enjoyed: in fine, a sense of religion will be kept up even among those who do not attend any place of public worship. It is vain to expect that, without a liberal establishment, the people will procure for themselves religious instruction. It is well known, that wherever the people pay their Clergy there is a continual succession of disputes, and the Minister's usefulness is destroyed. In America, with a very few exceptions, the Ministers are kept in a state of poverty and dependance, by which their exertions are cramped or rendered useless. The people are accustomed to change them, like any other servant, at the end of a few months, and to throw them on the world to combat poverty and contempt. The Congregations make and unmake their Pastors at pleasure, who must preach so as to please, on pain of losing their situations; in this way the very end of preaching is lost and destroyed. Are the people vicious, the Clergyman must be blind to their faults; is he conscientious, they withdraw their support, and he must march or starve. Instances are found of Clergymen forsaken in their old age, by the people among whom they

had laboured in their youth. As soon as they were found unable to do the duties of their office from age, they were deserted, their former services forgotten, and their gray hairs brought with sorrow, poverty, and anguish, to the grave. Let all the enemies of Establishments in England and Scotland march through the United States, and then let them decide. So useful is a standing Ministry, that it has been held by many, and not without reason, a proof of the truth of Christianity; no other religion could have suggested an idea so grand and affecting, as to place a public Teacher in every small Society through the world.

THE
FOLLOWING EXCELLENT SUMMARY,

OF THE

Duties and Advantages of a Parish Priest,

Is extracted from the Monthly Magazine, for Jan. 1811,

AND PROVES THE GREAT ADVANTAGE

OF A

RELIGIOUS ESTABLISHMENT.

I.

THE institution of Parochial Instructors of the people in the duties of morality, and in the doctrines of Revelation, is so eminently wise and beneficial, that it may be adduced as collateral evidence of the divine origin of that Religion by which it was formed and established.

II.

It is an institution so essential to a due moral and spiritual influence over the people, and it gives so permanent and universal an effect to vital religion, that Parish Priests, and those authorities which appoint and superintend them, become important and necessary branches of the Church of Christ.

III. Every

III.

Every Parish Priest is, therefore, an integral part of God's visible Church on earth; hence arises the evangelical character of the priesthood; hence the respect which it claims of society; and hence all the obligations of personal duty and example.

IV.

The Parish Priest is bound by the nature of his functions, and the object of his office, to reside among the souls whom it is his duty to instruct by his precept and conduct, and whom it should be his constant labour to prepare for the immortality announced in the Gospel.

V.

He is the moral guardian of his flock, and consequently bound to preserve them in unity, in mutual love, and in good offices towards one another. He should be their impartial umpire in matters of dispute, should allay their violent and selfish passions, and preserve the social affections among kindred. He ought, however, never to become a party in disputes; but to avoid being treated as a middler, should evince a common affection for the disputants, exhorting the implacable by the doctrines of Christ, and honouring mutual forgiveness, in the same manner as on the repentance of sinners, rejoicings are made in Heaven.

VI.

He should constantly assist and advise the overseers

seers of the poor in the discharge of their delicate and interesting duties ; and should draw strong distinctions between the virtuous and the vicious poor, taking care to reclaim the latter by gentle means, by forbearance and charity, and by extending the rewards of virtue to them, as soon as they afford indications of amendment.

VII.

As ignorance is the parent of vice, as knowledge is the parent of civilization, and as the unlettered can have little conception of the evidences and doctrines of that Gospel which they are unable to read, or of the nature of moral obligation, it is his duty to establish and maintain, by his influence and example, all institutions which have for their object, the direct education of the children of the poor.

VIII.

Whatever be his income, he should live within it, and become a pattern of moderation, temperance, and contentment, to those who are expected to curb their own passions, by his example, and who will be likely to respect his precepts, so far only as their efficacy is demonstrated by their influence on his own conduct.

IX.

He should know enough of the art of medicine to be able to administer relief in cases which do not admit of delay ; and he should be provided with a small stock of simple galenicals, the effect of which, in particular disorders, has been well ascertained.

X. He

X.

He should apply his superior education to remove vulgar errors, and superstition of all kinds; he should promote intellectual improvement among those who desire it; he should lend books, and give advice in the choice of others; he should also recommend the adoption of all improvements in the arts of life, which are consequent on the labours of men of science.

XI.

He should prove the value of his own tenets, by exhibiting in his own example their happy results; and he should bear with charity the occasional heresies, or variances of opinion which, owing to the freedom of thought, may sometimes be honestly and conscientiously cherished by some of his parishioners. If they cannot be corrected by gentle means, they will be confirmed in their errors, should violence or denunciation be resorted to. Above all things, he should be tolerant towards sectaries, and forbearing towards enthusiasts and visionaries.

XII.

He should be punctual in the hours of public service, and should perform all the rites of religion with devotional feeling and unvarying solemnity. Nothing in his conduct should be indifferent; and even at a feast, he should remember that he is looked upon as the Minister of a holy religion, and that his levities or sensualities will sanction greater vices
in

in those who reverence his character, and quote him as their example.

XIII.

He will find little difficulty in collecting his dues and tythes, if he has succeeded in impressing his parishioners with a well founded respect for his office and personal character; but in all cases of dispute, he should convince them before he attempts to force them; he should appeal to arbitration rather than to law; and he should endeavour to bring over the refractory by the influence of the liberal and well disposed.

XIV.

He should render himself the organ of the benevolence of his parishioners, by recommending frequent collections for particular objects of compassion, and by superintending their distribution. He should, in performing this duty, increase the comfort and the number of cottages; encourage habits, of cleanliness, sobriety, humanity, and industry; promote marriages and the settlement of young persons; countenance moderate hilarity on festive days; distribute periodical public rewards to those who afford instances of peculiar good conduct; create provisions for the sick and aged; and signalize eminent industry and domestic virtue in the humblest stations, even after death.

XV.

Being considered by the great as a constant seeker of preferment, he should be scrupulously modest and delicate in his advances to them, or he will expose

pose himself to their ridicule, and defeat his purpose, besides degrading the religion of self denial and humility.

XVI.

He should never meddle with the political parties of the state ; and in elections, or local questions of a mere political tendency, he should avoid committing the infallibility of his sacred character, by joining in the errors and passionate ebullitions of partizans. He ought in such matters to withhold his interference, except in favour of those only who are eminent for their personal virtues : and he ought never to become a partizan, except when evident virtue is opposed to or oppressed by notorious vice. His only criterion of decision should be the balance of vice or virtue in the objects.

XVII.

His station, character, and independent provision, whether it be great or small, render him an object of envy to other classes of society, and eminently qualify him to pass through life with respect, usefulness, and happiness ; and whatever may be the outward pomp and shew of other stations of the community, there is no social condition which unites so much placid enjoyment, and so many objects for the gratification of those passions which lead to self satisfaction, with so permanent a prospect of competency and comfort, and so great a certainty of preserving health, and attaining long life and future felicity, as that of the Parish Priest.

COMMON SENSE.

